

THE
HISTORY
OF THE
FIRST PLANTING
OF THE
CHRISTIAN RELIGION:

Taken from the

ACTS of the APOSTLES, and their *epistles.*



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Each of which is described in the Map by different marks, viz. the 1st (.....) 2^d (---) 3^d (xxx) 4th (---) 5th (---)*

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THE HISTORY OF THE

CHRISTIAN MISSION

IN THE EAST

AND THE WEST

FROM THE FIRST

TO THE PRESENT

TIME

BY GEORGE A. SMITH

OF THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER DAY SAINTS

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And, if GOD has seen fit, in this way, to instruct mankind; we cannot, surely, study the scriptures, in a better method, than that, in which the divine wisdom saw fit they should be written.

All, who wish well to religion, will rejoice to see christianity represented, in the most clear and just manner. But divines are, more especially, obliged to do what they can; not onely to encourage others; but to cultivate the study of the scriptures, themselves. In order to show his inclination, to help forward so great and desireable a work; the author has endeavored to collect the history of the first planting of the christian religion, from the most faithful and authentic records, of the APOSTLES, and evangelists; and to compare it with the jewish and roman history; as far as they affected christianity, within this period.

As the epistles make up a great, and a noble, part of the canon of the new testament, they are abridged; and reduced (as near as the author could do it) to their proper times, and places. The circumstances of the churches, or persons, to which they were written, are considered; as well as the more immediate occasion of writeing them. And it is shown, how exactly they answer the end, for which they were written.

*A dissertation, also, is added; to show that St. LUKE was the author of the acts of the APOSTLES: that he published that book, while many of the APOSTLES, and primitive christians, who knew the facts, were alive, to attest the same. And (supposeing that is an authentic history) christianity must, certainly, and of course, be a divine revelation, and worthy of the highest regard *.*

In the grand divisions, and in many other things, the author has been much obliged to the late Lord Barrington's Miscellanea sacra. In the jewish and roman history, he has had the greatest assistance from Josephus, among the antients; and, among the moderns, from the Credibility of the gospel-history, part I. written by his much-esteemed friend, Dr. Lardner. In the dissertation, at the end of volume the second, the second part of the design of the last-mentioned judicious, and

* N. B. The reader may find an account of the additions and alterations, in this second edition, in the præface to the appendix, or to volume the third.

and laborious author; together with Mr. Jones, on the canon of the new testament; have afforded him considerable assistance. But, (besides these learned writers; to whom he is chiefly indebted) after the author had drawn up his own account of the christian history, from the new testament itself, he consulted the principal critics and commentators; and he gratefully acknowledges the assistance, which he has had from them. However; he has followed no author, implicitly; nor any farther, than their sentiments appeared to him to be just, and well-grounded.

This work has been the care and study of some years; as far as health, and other affairs, would permit. For, this appeared, to the author, of as much greater importance, than any other history whatever; as morality and religion are more excellent, than any temporal affairs; and the history of true religion, præferrable to that of impostures and delusions. — But, especially, as this is the most momentous part of the sacred history itself. For Moses, and the prophets, referred to the coming of the messiah. And the messiah, when he came, referred to the pouring out, and ministry, of the spirit; as the last, and the best, dispensation, which GOD would ever vouchsafe to grant unto the children of men.

Here, we may see, how the father of the universe condescended to interpose, in order to reform the fallen race of mankind; at a time, when idolatry, superstition, profound ignorance of religious truths, and the most amazing wickedness, did, almost universally, prevail: — as well as what was the success of so great and extraordinary an undertaking. — From the smallest beginnings; and, by the wisest, and most reasonable, methods; christianity arose, swiftly, to all its height and glory. Like a grain of mustard-seed; which, from a small seed, quickly shoots up, to a considerable stalk, and a great many spreading branches. Or, like a little leaven; which quickly diffuseth itself through the whole lump. Or, finally, like the stone, in Daniel's vision; which was cut, out of the mountain, without hands; and presently became, itself, so great a mountain, as to fill the whole earth.

Without the power and influence of the temporal magistrate, christianity spread, and gained ground. Nay; in opposition to all the wit, and malice, of a corrupt world, it, almost every where, became victorious; and triumphed, by the force of its own innate goodness, as well as by external evidence.

For

For three hundred years, christianity lived, and flourished, under numberless difficulties and discouragements; and, amidst frequent, and fierce, persecutions. After the roman empire became christian, it was greatly corrupted; 'till the empire fell; and made way, for the dominion, and grandeur, of the bishop of Rome. Under whom, the corruption arose to an amazing height; and true christianity was almost lost, for several ages.

It is not much above two hundred years, from the commencement of the glorious reformation. Since which, the protestants have not been able, intirely, to shake off the spirit of infallibility and persecution. We live, indeed, in a day, when liberty is in the ascendent; and ours the happy nation, where it is enjoyed, in a more ample manner, than in any other age, or nation, whatever. — Thanks be to heaven, for the inestimable blessing, of the illustrious house of Hanover! — But it is scarce half an age, since liberty, the greatest of temporal blessings, was precarious. It is, therefore, no wonder, that the study of the scriptures, (as well as of other arts and sciences,) is capable of improvement; and that, by free inquiry, some things are found to have been misrepresented, in the ages of darknesse and tyranny.

May heaven grant mankind universal liberty; and settle it upon the most firm and lasting basis! And, as knowlege increases, may virtue and true piety proportionably increase; and christians adorn their most excellent religion, by a sutable temper and practice!

The author's sincere attempt to promote so extensive a good, according to his capacity and station, doeth, at present, afford him the highest pleasure: will, (he doubts not,) yield him the most easie and satisfying reflections, in the concluding scenes of life; and be reviewed, with transport, in the cœlestial mansions, and through the endlessly revolving ages of eternity. Amen!

*Grainge-walk, Southwark,
September 1. 1735.*

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H I S T O R Y
O F T H E
F I R S T P L A N T I N G
O F T H E
C H R I S T I A N R E L I G I O N , & c .

The I N T R O D U C T I O N .

S E C T . I .

THE WISE AND POWERFUL CREATOR seemeth evidently to have designed, and hath actually made, a very great variety of creatures, both animate and inanimate; though the gradations are so easie and gentle, that the highest and most perfect of an inferior classe falls very little short of the lowest and least perfect of those of a superior rank and order. Nay, there is not only a difference between the various ranks and orders of created beings; but even, in the same species, the difference is great and remarkable.

As to the race of men; GOD hath made them reasonable and free agents; though they appear to be of a low rank, compared with other intelligent beings. But, if we look into the *human species* itself, different men have very different natural capacities. All men have (no doubt) had the means of attaining that knowlege, which is absolutely necessary to salvation; in what time, or place, soever, they have lived. But *that great being*, who created the world with

Vol. I.

B

such

SECT.
I.

2 *The state of mankind, when christianity was first planted.*

SECT. I. such an amazing variety, and gave some men a capacity much superior to others, might (very consistently with the same wisdom and goodnesse) make different discoveries, at different times, or to different persons, or nations; either by *immediate revelation*, or *authentic tradition*: but always upon these two expresse conditions; *namely*, that such a *revelation* should be looked upon, as a superior capacity, or additional talent, capable of very great improvements, and for which they, who have it, remain accountable; — and, likewise, that they should use all the *positive institutions* of such a *revelation*, in an intire subordination to things, which are of an eternal, unalterable, nature; *namely*, justice and charity, temperance and piety.

In order to see the propriety of GOD's giving the *christian revelation*, it will be proper to take a brief view of the state of mankind. — The *nations* in general were sunk into an amazing degree of vice and wickednesse; and what greatly supported and encouraged their vicious practices, was, their profound ignorance of the *true God*, and their stupid and absurd *idolatry*. The *nation of Israel*, who retained the most just notions of *the deity*, had a *standing revelation* of the *divine will*; and were raised up, to bear their testimony against the great *corruptions of religion*, and particularly against *idolatry*. But they, also, about this time, were themselves fallen into great and amazing corruptions; relying more upon their descent from pious ancestors, and upon the observation of rites and ceremonies, than upon personal virtue and real piety; and, by their traditionary divinity, making void *the scriptures*, which contained *the revelation of the mind and will of GOD*. — In such a state of things, how could an *universal reformation* have been effected, without the divine interposure?

The *heathen sages and philosophers*, though some of them men of distinguished knowlege and virtue, had in vane attempted an *universal reformation*. Their *priests* and *poets* rather corrupted, than reformed, *their religion*. — The *doctors* of the *jewish nation* had, by their glosses, taken away the key of knowlege, and obscured the light of *divine revelation*. But, notwithstanding that, their *antient prophets* had so frequently and expresse prophesied that, about this time, an extraordinary person was to come, who should be a *light to the nations*, as well as the glory of *Israel*, that it was become the national expectation; and the *jews*, in general, were daily looking for his appearance.

SECT.

S E C T. II.

JESUS (who was the *great prophet and savior of the world*, and of whose coming the *antient jewish prophets* had so expressly prophesied) descended, in a miraculous manner, from *Mary*, a virgin, of the family of *David*, and was borne at *Bethlehem*. SECT.
II.

Besides some extraordinary events, which attended his birth, we are informed that he was circumcised, on the eighth day; and afterwards presented in the temple, according to the custom of the *jewish law*. But there is little said of the early and private parts of his life, except his going up to the temple, at the feast of the *pass-over*; when, though he was only twelve years of age, he gave manifest proofs of uncommon wisdom. After that, he returned to *Nazareth*, and was subject to his parents.

The nations, in general, had grievously abused *the law of nature*; and had been, for many ages, without any *written, divine, revelation*. But, among the *jews*, the *law* and the *prophets* continued in full force and obligation, till the coming of *John the baptist*. From the time of his appearing, to *Israel*, as a *prophet*, the way began to be more immediately prepared for the approach of *the kingdom of God*; and all pious and well-disposed persons endeavored to qualify themselves to be the proper subjects of *that kingdom of righteousness*.

When an *universal reformation* was going to be attempted, it was highly fit and proper to begin with the *jews*; as they acknowledged *the true God*, and retained the soundest principles of *religion*; though greatly obscured, and too little regarded in practice. — Accordingly; in the fifteenth year of the reign of *Tiberius Cæsar*, then emperor of *Rome*; that is, reckoning from the time of his being taken in co-partner, with *Augustus*, in the empire, *Pontius Pilate* being procurator of *Judæa*, and *Herod Antipas tetrarch* of *Galilee*; *John*, the son of *Zacharias*, of the race of the *jewish priests*, came, in the character of an extraordinary prophet; and appeared in the towns and villages, which lay dispersed in *the wilderness of Judæa*. He was borne but a few months before *JESUS*; and was called *the baptist*; because he emblematically baptized his followers, as well as preached *the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins*. His garb, and severe manner of life, represented that of the antient prophet *Elijah*; and his spirit, and business, were like his. For he came

SECT.
II.

to call upon the nation to reform : allegeing, as his main argument, that *the kingdom of the messiah* was at hand ; in which no descent from pious ancestors, no national privileges, nor external performances ; nor any thing else, but real virtue and unfeigned holiness, would be accepted of GOD.

Thus (like the harbingers sent, by great princes, to prepare their way before them) he levelled mountains, filled up vallies, made crooked things straight, and rough places plane, to smooth the way for the approach of *the great king, the messiah*.

The reckoning of the *jews*, from *Daniel's* famous prophetic of the seventy weeks, was now up and finished ; and *they were daily looking when the kingdom of GOD would appear*. When *John*, therefore, preached, concerning the speedy approach of the *messiah's kingdom*, and baptized the proselytes, whom he made, it greatly alarmed the whole nation ; so that multitudes flocked out to him, from all parts of *Judæa* ; and were baptized of him, in the river *Jordan* ; *confessing their sins*. And not only the people suspected that *John* was the *messiah* ; but even the *jewish sanhedrim* sent a deputation of *priests* and *levites*, in a solemn manner, from *Jerusalem*, to inquire of him, “ Who he was ? and whether he himself was not *the CHRIST* ? ” In answer to which, *John* openly declared, “ That “ he was not *the CHRIST* ; but that great and extraordinary person “ was among them ; though, as yet, they knew him not. And, notwithstanding he came after him, he was so far his superior as “ that he was unworthy to do the meanest office for him.” — One particular, in which *John* declared that great person would excel him, was, “ that though he himself baptized, only with water, unto repentance, the *messiah* would baptize with the *holy spirit*, and “ with fire.”

When *John* had preached about half a year, and a great part of the people were baptized by him, *JESUS* of *Nazareth*, who was then about thirty years of age, came also to *John*, at *Jordan*, to be by him invested in his high and sacred office by baptism.

And (as he had emptied himself upon his incarnation, and was now going to enter upon his *prophetic office*, or public ministry) as soon as he came up, from the river, the heavens were opened, and the *holy spirit* was poured down upon him ; attended with the rays of a visible glory. And a voice, at the same time, came from the *excellent majesty*, declaring him to be *the well-beloved son of GOD*. — When *JESUS*, the great high-priest, was thus consecrated, by being baptized with water, and anointed with the *holy spirit*, and with power,

power^a, he was led, by *the spirit*, into a solitary wilder nesse, where he fasted forty days and forty nights; as *Moses* and *Elias* had done, before they attempted a reformation in *Israel*. SECT.
II.

And, after he had resisted a great and remarkable temptation, he returned, in the power of *the spirit*, into *Galilee*; where he began to work miracles, and gather disciples, who saw his glory, and believed on him.

^b *John Baptist*, who still continued preaching and baptizing, bore testimony to him, and told the people, “that he was the very person, of whom he had spoken; that JESUS his disciples were to increase, but his to decrease; that JESUS was sent of GOD, and spoke the words of GOD; and that GOD had not given *his spirit* by measure unto him.”

Soon after this, *John* was cast into prison, for his free, but just, reproofs of *Herod Antipas*, the *tetrarch of Galilee*; by whose orders, he was also afterwards beheaded. When *John* was cast into prison, JESUS (who had now such a fulness of *the spirit*) began more publicly to preach repentance (as *John* had done) to prepare men for the coming of *his spiritual kingdom*. By his own personal ministry, JESUS made several disciples (who were *baptized*, like the disciples of *John*; to intimate that purity of mind and life, to which they were now called.) And, after a night spent in prayer and devotion, he, according to the directions, which he then received from *his father*, selected, the next morning, twelve, from among the multitude of his *disciples*, whom he also called and constituted APOSTLES. They were to be the prime ministers of *his kingdom*. And, therefore, he took a particular care to train them up, for the great work, to which they were designed; by allowing them commonly to live, and very familiarly to converse, with him; that they might be thoroughly acquainted with his person, life, doctrine, and miracles; and, particularly, that they might be able to bear witness to the world of *his resurrection*.

Their names were, *Simon Peter*; *James the elder*, and *John* his brother: *Andrew*, [brother to *Simon Peter*;] *Philip*, *Thomas*, *Bartholomew*, *Matthew*, [who was also called *Levi*, son to *Alphæus*;] *James*, [son of another *Alphæus*. He was also called *James the less*, and the brother, or kinsman, of our LORD.] *Simon Zelotes*. *Judas*, the brother of *James the less*; [who was, likewise, called *Lebbæus* and *Thaddæus*.] And, lastly, *Judas Iscariot*, who afterwards betrayed HIS LORD.

^a Exod. xxix. 4; 7.

^b See Dr. Lardner's introduction to the Credibility of the gospel-history, part ii.

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II.

LORD. [*See the note on the history before St. James, p. 7, 8.*] — With these twelve men, *Jesus* travelled through the towns and villages of *Judæa*; resorting, likewise, to *Jerusalem*, at the great festivals of the *jewish nation*.

The doctrine, which he preached, was, that men should repent; for he came not to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance. He farther taught, that GOD is to be worshiped in spirit and truth; and that such worship will be accepted, in all places. That the things, which defile a man, are those, which procede out of the heart; evil thoughts, murthers, adulteries, fornication, theft, false-witness, blasphemies. But to eat with unwashen hands defileth not a man. That the great branches of men's duty, are, to love GOD above all, and their neighbors as themselves: That men should do to others, as they could reasonably desire that others, in like circumstances, should do to them. That they ought to imitate GOD, in mercy, forgiveness, and all goodness. That they ought to be pure in heart, as well as unblameable in their outward actions. That they ought to pray, fast, and give alms, not out of vane ostentation, or to be seen of men; but to do all things with an eye to the approbation and acceptance of GOD, who seeth the most secret, as well as the most public, actions.

He recommended moderate affections for the things of the present world; and bade men seek, in the first place, the kingdom of GOD, and his righteousness; and, without solicitude and anxiety about the concerns of the present life, to confide in the providence of GOD, who oversees and directs all things. — He assured them that they, who believed in GOD, and in him whom GOD had sent, and obeyed the commandments delivered by him, should enjoy eternal life: And that, in order to their enjoying it, he himself would raise them up, at the last day. That GOD had given all judgment and authority to him; and that he would come again, and render to every man according to his works. — And of this doctrine, taught by him, he required a sincere and open profession; declaring, *Who-soever shall confesse me before men; him will I, also, confesse before my father, who is in heaven. But whosoever shall denie me before men; him will I, also, denie, before my father, who is in heaven.*

These, and the like excellent precepts, and powerful inducements to all virtue, he taught and inculcated, every where; to the poor, as well as to the rich; and to persons in high stations, as well as to the multitude. Sometimes, he spoke planely, and sometimes in the more covert way of parable and similitude; as they were able to hear, or dis-

disposed to regard, him. But, always, with such a mixture of authority and familiarity for the manner, such weight and dignity for the matter of his discourses, that the multitude *wondered at the gracious words, which proceeded out of his mouth*; and even his enemies were obliged to acknowledge, that *never man spoke as he did*.

As he went about, teaching this doctrine, he worked many miracles, as evidences of the truth of what he said, and that the *father* had sent him. He turned water into wine; fed, with a few loaves and fishes, great multitudes, in desert places; walked upon the sea; calmed the winds and the waves; gave sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, speech to the dumb, soundness and strength to the lame, and those that were bowed down; healed diseases of all sorts, even the most inveterate, and such as were otherwise reckoned incurable; restored to their right minds *dæmoniacs*, or *lunatics*; and even raised the dead. — These miracles were performed, at his word, in an instant; and some were worked on persons at a distance from him. They were done, by him, in the most public and open manner, at *Jerusalem*, and in every part of *Judæa* and *Galilee*: in cities, in villages, in synagogues, in private houses, in the streets, and in the high-ways; in the fields, and in the wilderness; upon a great many of the *jews*, and upon some few *gentiles*: before *scribes*, and *pharisees*, and *rulers of synagogues*; when he was attended, some times, by a few persons; but at other times, by great multitudes. And, in a word, before men of all characters.

There were also, in the course of his ministry, divers other signal testimonies given to him. Besides the voice from heaven, at his *baptism*, he was transfigured, in the presence of three of his disciples; *when his face shone like the sun, and his raiment was white as the light*. And a bright cloud overshadowed them; and behold a voice came out of the cloud, saying, “*This is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.*” At another time, being at *Jerusalem*, surrounded by a great multitude, and having prayed, “*Father, glorify thy name;*” there came a voice from heaven, saying, “*I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.*”

To all these great and extraordinary things he appealed, as proofs of his divine mission and authority; referring men to the witness of *John*, the miracles which he himself had worked, and these testimonies from heaven.

Besides the wonderful works done by him, he also manifested a clear knowledge of the thoughts and designs of men; and foretold, frequently, expressly, and with many circumstances, his own death and

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and resurrection; the descent of the *holy spirit* upon the APOSTLES; their sufferings and succeſſe; the destruction of *Jerusalem*; (at the prospect of which, he was ſo much affected, as to lament over that city with tears; notwithstanding he foreſaw they would apprehend and murder him :) And he prædicted many other events; that, when they came to paſſe, his diſciples and others might be confirmed in their faith in him, and his doctrine.

Once, during his own personal miniſtry, as a ſpecimen of their future work, and a trial of their abilities, he ſent forth his twelve APOSTLES, with power over evil ſpirits; and to heal the ſick, and cure all diſeaſes, as a teſtimony of their doctrine; which was, that *the kingdom of GOD was at hand*. And, accordingly, they went, by two and two, through the towns and villages of *Judæa*, to præpare the way before his face, and to proclaim what he had taught them; the ſubſtance of which, was, “that all *Judæa* ſhould repent; becauſe the *holy kingdom* of the *meſſiah* was approaching.” But that expedition was ſoon over. And, when they returned to JESUS, to attend upon him, he gave to ſeventy other of his diſciples the like commiſſion and extraordinary powers; that they might go over *Judæa*, a ſecond time, with the ſame ſolemn meſſage, and work like miraculous cures.—All theſe things were ſtill farther to rouse men’s attention to what was to follow.

While GOD thus glorified him, he voluntarily lived in a mean condition, without external ſtate and ſplendor; and was exceeſſing meek and condeſcending in his behavior towards his diſciples; and towards all, who reſorted to him, for inſtruction, or relief: at the ſame time, freely declaring to all their duty, and impartially correcting the faults and failings of his diſciples; and, with a true *prophetic* reſolution and intrepidity, reproveing the hypocriſie, pride, ambition, covetouſneſſe, falſe maxims, and vane traditions, of the *ſcribes*, *phariſees*, and *ſaducees*, and of the great and powerful of the *jewiſh nation*.

For the laſt year of his public miniſtry, the twelve APOSTLES ſeem to have lived with him, as his family, or conſtant attendents. Theſe twelve appear, all of them, (except *Judas Iſcariot*) to have been men of great ſimplicity and integrity; but they were all carried away with the national prejudice; namely, “that the *meſſiah* ſhould be a *temporal prince*, as well as a *prophet* ;” and they expected to be the leading men in that his *temporal kingdom*.

That prejudice ſeemeth to have taken it’s riſe from their not carefully and ſufficiently diſtinguiſhing between CHRIST’S firſt and ſecond

J E S U S foresees his approaching death.

9

cond coming. His *first coming* was (according to the *antient prophets*) to be in the form of a servant; poor, meek, patient, and humble. But his *second coming* will be glorious and majestic, like *messiah the prince, the king of kings, and lord of lords*. That prejudice, from whencesoever it arose, (as well as many others) OUR LORD endeavored gently to remove. But they never saw through their mistake, 'till after the effusion of the *holy spirit*.

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Acts i. 1.

To these twelve he gave a second commission, as his APOSTLES; and promised them full power, instructions, and credentials, in order to erect *his kingdom*, after his resurrection and ascension. But their minds ran so much upon *the temporal kingdom*, and the *messiah's abiding for-ever*, that they could not bear to hear him talk of *dying*. He, therefore, often took occasion to speak of it. But they hoped he had some figurative meaning, and that he would never really die — To prevent their forsaking him, upon his crucifixion, he likewise (as has been already observed) admitted the three most inquisitive of them, to behold his *transfiguration*, upon the mount; as an emblem of that future *kingdom* and glory, to which he should finally arrive; and in which he will appear, at his second coming, notwithstanding the mean and suffering condition, in which they then beheld him.

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JESUS, having so fully taught and confirmed his doctrine; and made several disciples, in *Jerusalem, Judæa, and Samaria*; but chiefly in *the lower Galilee*; and having trained up the twelve, whom GOD had given him to be his APOSTLES, (to train up whom was one great part of his business here below,) he went up to *Jerusalem*, at the public festival of the *passover*. For he knew that the time of his departure out of this world was just approaching, and that the *father* had put all things into his hands. He, therefore, took his leave of his disciples, in the most affectionate and instructive manner, and appointed a memorial of himself, and of his love; *namely*, “that
“ of eating bread, and drinking wine, in commemoration of his dying
“ for their sakes; and as a pledge of his future returning, with
“ power and glory, to raise them, and make them eternally hap-
“ py.” After which, he retired to a private place, whither he had

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used

SECT. III. used sometimes to resort with his disciples; and having intirely resigned himself to the will of his *father*, with regard to the bitter sufferings approaching; of which he then had a near and most affecting prospect; he was basely and ungratefully betrayed, by *Judas Iscariot*, one of his own *disciples*, for a small sum of money; who delivered him into the hands of his grand enemies, the *chief-priests* and *elders* of the *jewish nation*.

He was particularly acquainted with their enmity to him, and foresaw that he should then be apprehended, and put to death. But he would not, for all that, decline going up to *Jerusalem*, at that festival; neither would he use his power, in resisting, or making his escape. No! he was willing to seal the truth of his doctrine with his own blood; and to be as exemplary in his death, as he had been in his life; that he might teach his followers "rather to suffer with the truth, than betray it; and that life itself is no longer to be valued, than it is consistent with integrity, and the practice of righteousness." He died, therefore, as a martyr, and was cut off, but not for himself: voluntarily giving his soul an offering for sin, that he might redeem men from iniquity, and introduce everlasting righteousness. For his death was planely voluntary; as he foresaw the treatment, which he was to meet with, from the leading men of the nation of the *jews*; and yet bravely went among them, and without resistance suffered them to take away his life.

Nor was it any wonder that they should so treat him; considering their great wickedness, and his unpopular character, as a faithful prophet. For he had often and freely reprov'd their pride and hypocrisie; their laying a greater stress upon their descending from *Abraham*, and the *patriarchs*, and upon rites, ceremonies, and positive institutions, than upon real virtue, and true piety: their jostling out the *scriptures*, by the *systems* and *traditions*, which they had received from their *fathers*; their keeping the people in a blind subjection and dependence upon themselves, and leading them into error and wickedness; and, in one word, for all their enmity to truth and goodness. And, as his life and doctrine were so remarkably holy and excellent; and his miracles so evident and undeniable, so many and beneficent; that his character and authority among the people were not small; they were resolv'd upon his death; and had often attempted it, though hitherto they had attempted it in vane.

But, now, the hour appointed for his suffering death being come, *Judas* betrayed him into the hands of the leading men among the *jews*;

The sufferings of J E S U S.

II

jews; by whom he was examined and condemned, after he had in their presence solemnly avowed his great character. And then was by them accused, and prosecuted, before *Pontius Pilate*, the Roman *procurator*; who, at their earnest and clamorous importunity, was prevailed upon, against his own conscience, to condemn him to be crucified. And, accordingly, he was crucified, near *Jerusalem*, at the great feast of *the passover*, in the common place of execution, between two malefactors. However; during this very extraordinary scene of sufferings, there were some extraordinary testimonies given to his innocence and dignity. There was a darkness of three hours continuance over the whole land; the veil of the temple was rent asunder from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks were rent.

SECT.
III.
Acts i. 1.

JESUS, having expired on the cross, and *Pilate* having received particular information that he was dead; the body was, with his leave, taken down from the cross, and laid in a sepulchre, in which never man before was laid. And the *jewish sanhedrim* took care to have the sepulchre secured by a guard of *soldiers*; lest (as they said) *his disciples should come by night, and steal him away; and then say to the people, "He is risen from the dead."*

As to the effect, which this treatment of JESUS had upon the APOSTLES. When *Judas*, the traitor, saw that he was condemned, he was greatly concerned for what he had done; and went, and returned the money to the *jewish sanhedrim*, saying, "I have sinned, in having betrayed innocent blood." To which they answered, "What is that to us? see you to that." And he threw down the money in the temple; and, in extreme anguish of mind, went and hanged himself. The eleven other APOSTLES greatly bewailed and lamented JESUS his death. And (though they knew too much of his innocence and integrity to take him for an *impostor*, yet) they were greatly perplexed, and confounded, in their own minds, and scarce knew what judgment to form concerning him. Though thus they seem generally to have thought; that the *jews* had cut him off from obtaining the *temporal kingdom*, which they imagined he had all along designed to establish. But, in the midst of all their anxiety, they seem to have had little, or no, expectation of his resurrection.

However; as he had no sin, death had no power over him. Though, therefore, he willingly submitted to it, for a time, yet, early in the morning, on the third day from his crucifixion and burial, he came to life again; notwithstanding the great precautions of his

SECT. III. enemies, who had all the power and authority, in that country, at their service, on that occasion.

Acts i. 1. Now a resurrection from the dead being an event of so surprising and extraordinary a nature, and withal so strong an evidence in his favor; and as the APOSTLES were appointed of GOD to be witnesses of that grand fact unto the world; they were permitted to live with him, that they might be thoroughly acquainted with him. They were fully convinced (as multitudes both of his friends, and enemies, were) that he was certainly dead; and they had all the satisfaction, which they could reasonably desire, of the truth and reality of his resurrection. To prepare them to attend to a case so extraordinary, with due composure and care, he had not only mentioned his death and resurrection, frequently, before he suffered; but, after his resurrection, the discoveries were made gradually; and frequently, and in various manners, repeated. Several women, who had been the disciples of JESUS, went, early in the morning, to the sepulchre. And they found the sepulchre open, and the body gone. Upon which, *Mary Magdalene* went into the city, and told *Peter* and *John*, that the sepulchre was open, and the body removed. This occasioned the two apostles to run, in great surprize, to the sepulchre. And, upon examining the situation of the linen-cloathes, in which his body had been wraped, and the napkin which had been upon his head, it appeared to them to be highly probable that JESUS was risen from the dead. While *Mary Magdalene* was gone to carry that message to *Peter* and *John*, and before they came to the sepulchre, an angel told the other women, that he was risen from the dead, and that they should go, and tell his disciples that he was risen. They went into the city with that message. In the mean time, *Mary Magdalene* came back to the sepulchre, with *Peter* and *John*; and, when they were gone away, she continued at the sepulchre. Then JESUS appeared, and discovered himself gradually to her. She went (as JESUS had commanded her) and told the disciples; but most of them gave little, or no, credit to what she said. His second appearance was to the other women; as they were returning, the second time, from viewing the sepulchre. And he sent them, in like manner, to tell his disciples, that he was risen from the dead. His third appearance was to *Simon Peter*. His fourth was, when he joined in company with two of his disciples going to *Emmaus*. And (when he had sufficiently prepared them for the greatest attention) he appeared to ten of the APOSTLES. That was the fifth appearance of our LORD, after his resurrection.

The sixth appearance was to all the eleven APOSTLES. The seventh appearance was to seven of his disciples, at the lake of *Tiberias*, as they were fishing there. The eighth appearance was to all the eleven APOSTLES, upon a mountain in *Galilee*. The ninth was to five hundred of his disciples, at once; perhaps upon the same mountain, in *Galilee*. The tenth appearance was to *James*, the brother (or kinsman) of our LORD. The eleventh to all the APOSTLES, at *Jerusalem*, just before his ascension. — Besides these eleven, he made several other appearances to his disciples, which are not particularly specified; and that for the space of forty days. And, upon such appearances, his conversation generally turned upon something that related to the gospel-kingdom.

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III.
Acts i. 1,
&c.

The evidences, which they had of the truth of his resurrection, were such as these. They had known him very well, before he died; and, after his resurrection, they saw him again. They knew his face, his air, his stature, his voice, his looks, and all his features and lineaments. They talked to him, and heard him talk, upon various subjects, about which they had frequently conversed, before his death. They eat with him, and saw him eat. Nay; they felt and handled his body; and were sure that it was no spectre, nor apparition. They saw, and touched, the very scars of the wounds, which he had received on the cross. And (in one word) had all the satisfaction, which they themselves desired; or which the most scrupulous person could wish for, to convince him that his friend was alive, and present with him.

When he had convinced them; (who were indeed very hard to be convinced;) and had satisfied them, by plain facts, and clear, irresistible, evidence, that (though he had been crucified) he was certainly come to life again; — he told them, that all power was committed unto him, both in heaven and upon earth; and then he repeated their *apostolic commission*; which was, that they should go, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the father, and of the son, and of the holy spirit; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever he had commanded them. And, then, he emblematically breathed upon them, as prefiguring the gift of the holy spirit, which he designed shortly to bestow upon them; and by which they should be qualified for the full execution of their commission.

When he had given to these APOSTLES (whom he had chosen by the holy spirit^c) all the instructions about the kingdom of GOD, which

Ver. 2. ^c Whom he had chosen by the holy spirit.] Beza hath mentioned two ancient manuscripts, that so joined the words; namely, διὰ τοῦ ἁγίου ἔξελεξατο, &c. and.

SECT. III. which their minds were capable of, and which the state of things then required; he ordered them to tarry at *Jerusalem*; (the very place, where he had been crucified so lately; and from whence their fears would be most apt to drive them;) 'till he should send down upon them *the holy spirit*; "And that (saith he) is the promise of my father, of which you have heard me speak formerly. For John baptized only with water, as præparatory to my coming; but, within a few days, ye shall be baptized with *the holy spirit*, whose coming down shall be attended with a glory, like a flame of fire."

Acts i. 6,
&c.

Haveing thus set all things in order for a return to his father, he led the APOSTLES out of *Jerusalem*, to that part of the mount of *Olives*, which was called *Bethany*; that there they might see him ascend into heaven. He had before intimated to them, since his resurrection, that all power was committed unto him, both in heaven and upon earth; and had, likewise, ordered them to go and tarry, some time, at *Jerusalem*, the metropolis of the kingdom. — They, hearing

and Dr. Mill hath informed us, that two of Stephens his manuscripts did so join the words. But Beza's most antient manuscript (now called the Cambridge manuscript) is yet a more evident confirmation. For there the words stand thus, ἀρχὴ ἢς ἡμέρας ἀνελήφθη, ἐνταλάμενος τοῖς ἀποστόλοις, ὅς ἐξελέξατο διὰ πνεύματος ἁγίου. *Until the day that he was taken up, when he had given commandments unto the apostles, whom he had chosen by the holy spirit.* [See Beza in loc. & Wetstein.]

The syriac, also, and æthiopic versions, have rendered it, as we have here done. And, though the sense, given in our common english translation, is according to the more usual order of the words, as they now stand in the original; yet (as there are no stops in the most antient manuscripts) the words may be so pointed, as very well to admit of the sense here given. And I am apt to think that this sense is more agreeable to the current of holy scripture. For, though, when OUR LORD had emptied himself, and was in his state of humiliation, he had conferred upon him, before he began his ministry, *the spirit*, without measure; and preached, acted, and worked miracles, by that fulnesse of the spirit; yet I do not remember any text of scripture, which intimateth his acting by *the spirit*, after his resurrection. I, therefore, would rather refer this agency of *the spirit* to CHRIST's choosing of the APOSTLES, during his state of humiliation, than to his giving them commandments, after he was risen, and had entered upon his state of exaltation. — The APOSTLES being chosen, or pointed out, by *the spirit*, is according to other representations in scripture. [Acts xiii. 2.] *The spirit* (by the mouth of the prophets at Antioch) ordered Saul and Barnabas to be separated unto the work, to which he had lately called them. Nay; even inferior officers were so appointed. [Acts xx. 28.] *The holy spirit* had made some of the elders at Ephesus, bishops. — But, if any person should choose to read all, between ἡμέρας, and ἀνελήφθη, in a parenthesis; and refer [CHRIST's giving commandments by the spirit,] to what he did, during his personal ministry here upon earth, or before his crucifixion: he may retain the common order and punctuation of the words; and a sense, which I cannot but very much approve: though I prefer the order, in which they are placed in the Cambridge manuscript; and the interpretation, to which that seems most naturally to lead us.

hearing these things, and haveing their minds so præposseſſed with the hopes of that *temporal kingdom*, which the *jews* at this day do fully expect; and, being surprized that JESUS had ſaid nothing about it, they were very deſireous to know, “ Whether he would “ not now be pleaſed to ſhake off the *Roman yoke*, and reſtore the “ dominion to *Iſrael*?” For they were anxious to be acquainted, what part they ſhould tranſact, in that grand revolution; and were, very probably, surprized to think that ſo wicked and ungrateful a nation, as that of the *jews*, ſhould be ſo highly favored; and that ſo very ſoon after they had murdered *the LORD of life and glory*. When they propoſed that queſtion, JESUS replied. “ It is not your “ buſineſſe, at preſent, to know particularly the exact times and “ ſeaſons, which *my father* hath at his own diſpoſeal, and which he “ hath wiſely calculated and proportioned to the circumſtances of “ men and things. For ſuch a diſcovery you are not as yet able to “ bear. But (as I have often told you) *the holy ſpirit* ſhall be “ poured down upon you, and then ye ſhall underſtand the nature “ of *my kingdom*; and ſhall be enabled to ſpread it, with great ſwift- “ neſſe and ſucceſſe; both through *Jeruſalem, Judæa, Samaria,* “ and unto the uttermoſt boundaries of the earth.”

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Acts i. 6,
&c.

When he had made an end of ſpeaking; and, like a departing friend, left his laſt commands with them; he liſted up his hands upon the APOSTLES, and, in a moſt ſolemn and affectionate manner, took his leave of them, and bleſſed them. And then, in their ſight, (as *Elijah* did in the ſight of his ſucceſſor *Eliſha*, who was thereupon to receive a double portion of *his ſpirit*,) JESUS mounted, gradually, up into the air; and the holy angels, in a cloud of glory^d, conveyed him, out of the APOSTLES ſight, into the third heavens, the manſions of glory and bleſſedneſſe: Where he was received in a triumphant manner, ſeated at *his father's* right hand; and the government of the whole world, from thenceforth, committed unto him.

The APOSTLES ſtill continued looking up, after him, with fixed and longing eyes; as hoping, perhaps, that he would ſhortly return; — until two angels appeared unto them, like men, but in a glorious form, and bade them gaze no longer there. For JESUS was received up into heaven, quite out of their ſight; and there he was

Ver. 9. ^d Deut. xxxiii. 26. Pſal. civ. 3. Rev. i. 7. and xiv. 14. Compare alſo, with this, the tranſlation of the prophet *Elijah*, 2 Kings ii. 11. who was conducted to heaven by *angels*, which appeared like horſes and chariots of fire, or in a bright and luminous manner.

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According to the order and direction of the angels, the APOSTLES returned to *Jerusalem*, from *mount Olivet*; the highest part, or foot, of which mountain, was five furlongs from *Jerusalem*^e. But *Bethany*, the place, from which JESUS ascended, was about a mile from the city; and that space, the *jews* (who, by the decree of their wise men, were allowed to walk so far on their sabbath-days) used to call *a sabbath-day's journey*^f. Perhaps that decree of their wise men took it's rise from the distance between *the ark*, and *the nearest part of the camp*, when Israel was incamped in the wilderness. [See Josh. iii. 4. With which compare Numb. xxxv. 4, 5.]

S E C T. IV.

THERE is no small difficulty in settling the *chronology* of CHRIST's birth, and of his crucifixion. *Dionysius* surnamed *Exiguus*, a native of *Scythia*, and afterwards a *Roman abbot*, who flourished in the reign of the emperor *Justinian*, did, about the 527th year of the *vulgar æra*, begin to use the birth of CHRIST as an *epocha*. For the *Romans*, before that time, used to reckon from the building of the city of *Rome*, or from the *consuls*; the *Greeks*, by the *olympiads*; and the more eastern nations, from other *epocha's*.
From

Ver. 12. ^e Jos. Antiq. l. 20. c. 8. § 6. ὄρεω, — ἐλαιῶν — ὁ καὶ τῆς πόλεως ἀντικρυς κείμενον, ἀπέχει σαδία πέντε. De bell. Jud. l. 5. c. 2. § 3. ἐξ ἀπέχοντος τῶν Ἱεροσολύμων σαδίας, στρατοπεδεύσασθαι κατὰ τὸ ἐλαιῶν καλούμενον ὄρεω.

^f Vid. Syriac. vers. Drus. in observat. l. 2. c. 9. & l. 3. c. 12. quæstion. 1. 29. & in loc. Gerard. in harmon. evang. c. 144. p. 51. Reland. in Palest. S. p. 449, 450. Tremel. & Grot. in loc. Lightfoot's works, vol. ii. p. 39; 485; 637. Ainsworth on Exod. xvi. 29. Wotton's Misna, vol. ii. p. 161; 187, 188. Our blessed LORD ascended into heaven, from the mount of *Olives*; at, or near, the place, where he had been apprehended, and bound; and from whence he had been led away, like a felon; to be tried for his life, insulted, scourged, and condemned to crucifixion. He now goes off, in triumph, from the same mountain, into a place and state, worthy of his innocence and dignity.

From *Dionysius*, our countryman *Bede* took it, and used it in all his writings. And the credit, which he thereby gave it, recommended it to the common use of the *christians*, especially in these western parts. But though it is so common, it is now generally acknowledged to be defective; and to begin too late, by two years (according to some) but by three, four, or five, (according to others.) To which last, I confesse, I am most inclined; and reckon that the true *christian æra* ought to be fixed about five years before the *vulgar æra*.

SECT.
V.
Acts i.
13.

Nor is the difficulty much lesse, to determine the year of CHRIST's crucifixion. For *chronologers* have, some of them, allowed CHRIST's ministry to be no more than one year, and some odd months; others allow three passovers, after our LORD's baptism; others four; and others contend for five. I suppose OUR LORD's ministry to have begun, when he was thirty years old; to have continued only three passovers, or two years and an half; and that he was crucified, in the year of the *vulgar æra* 29, of CHRIST's life 33. when the two *Gemini* were *consuls*. [See *Le-Clerc's ecclesiastical history*, p. 288, &c. and his first dissertation annexed to his harmony of the gospels. *Origen against Celsus*, edit. *Cantab.* p. 67.]

But, though this be my opinion (as it is, also, that of some others) I have had little, or no, regard to it, in composing this work. For the history begins, agreeably to the common opinion and computation, at the 33d year of the *christian æra*; which 33d year falls in with part of the 19th and part of the 20th year of the reign of *Tiberius Cæsar*, the third *Roman emperor*, if we reckon from the death of *Augustus*. Or with part of his 22d, and part of his 23d year, if we reckon from the time that *Tiberius* was taken in, as co-partner with *Augustus*, in the empire.

S E C T. V.

THERE was in *Jerusalem* an upper room, in which the APOSTLES had been used to assemble with their LORD and master; — where they had eaten the last passover with him; and been present, at the first institution of the LORD's supper; — where, perhaps, they had assembled, since his resurrection; and had been favored with JESUS his company: — And such a room, many of

An. Christi
vulg. 33.
Tiber. 19.

An. Christi the richer and more devout jews used to have, in their houses, for
 33. religious exercises. — When the eleven APOSTLES returned from
 Tiber. 19. the mount of Olives, from whence they had seen JESUS ascend into
 SECT. V. heaven, and were come again into the city, they repaired, very
 Acts i. probably, to that same upper room, (which, as some say, was upon
 13, &c. mount Sion^s) expecting to find the christians there assembled. And,
 when they had entered, they found several women, who were JE-
 sus his disciples; particularly Mary, the mother of JESUS^h; and
 some men also of his kindred. The whole number amounted to
 about 120 persons, the number of a jewish council. It is very like-
 ly that most of the five hundred disciples, who met OUR LORD in
 Galilee, after his resurrection, did either live in Galilee, in the re-
 motest parts of Judæa, or in Samaria; and were not now in the city
 Jerusalem. But in that upper room, did these hundred and twenty
 frequently assemble, to spend their time in prayer, and other acts
 of devotion. Though they assembled very privately, and with the
 doors bolted for fear of the jews. For they had lately treated their
 LORD and master in the most cruel manner, and could not be sup-
 posed to have much more kindnesse and affection for them.

One day, when the disciples of JESUS were there unanimously
 assembled, St. PETER, who often acted as their mouth and præsi-
 dent, stood up, and made the following proposale. “ Brethrenⁱ, you
 “ know very well that Judas Iscariot (who was the guide to them
 “ that apprehended JESUS) was formerly one of our number, and
 “ had a share in the apostolate. He it was that betrayed OUR LORD.
 “ But, when he saw that he was condemned to crucifixion, Judas
 “ was

Ver. 13. ^s See Epiphanius, (*de ponder. c. 14.* as quoted by Hammond and Le-Clerc in
loc.) who asserteth that there was a christian church built, afterwards, upon the very
 spot; where (according to tradition) the house had stood, in which the APOSTLES
 were assembled, when the holy spirit was first poured out, upon them. But that was
 not within the verge of the temple. [See, also, the note on chap. ii. 6. and Mr. Whis-
 ton's essay upon the apostolic constitutions, vol. 3. p. 20, &c.] That the gospel should go
 out, from mount Sion, was agreeable to the prophetic, *Isai. ii. 3. Micah. iv. 2.*

Ver. 14. ^h It is probable, from our LORD's committing the care of his mother to
 John (the beloved disciple) that Joseph was dead, before OUR LORD's crucifixion. Here
 is the last mention of the virgin Mary. How long she lived, or what became of her
 afterwards, is uncertain. And, therefore, I shall say nothing about it.

Ver. 16. ⁱ ἄνδρες, ἀδελφοί, men, brethren.] So chap. ii. 29. and ἄνδρες, ἀδελφοί, καὶ
 πατέρες, men, brethren, and fathers, chap. vii. 2. Some have taken this for an he-
 braism. And it is true that it was usual with the hebrews: but it was used, also, by
 the politest greeks. ἄνδρες φίλοι, Xenophon. *Cyropæd. l. i. p. 61; & 210. edit. Hut-*
chinson, 4to, Ὁ ἄνδρες Πέρσαι καὶ Μέδοι, &c. p. 258, & passim. αἰπὸλ' ἀνὴρ, Hom. Il.
δ. 275. ἄνδρες Πέρσαι, Herodot. edit. Gale, p. 54. ad fin. ἄνδρες φίλοι, ibid. p. 192.

“ was sorry for what he had done, and brought again the thirty
 “ shekels of silver, and threw them down in the temple, being
 “ full of the utmost horror and consternation, when he reflected on
 “ the vile fact, of which he had been guilty; and, under this intole-
 “ rable anguish and remorse of conscience, he went away and
 “ hanged himself. But, falling down, upon his face, from the tree,
 “ he burst asunder in the middle, and all his bowels gushed out ^k.
 “ From which anguish of mind, and horrid self-murther, it evi-
 “ dently appeareth, that the vengeance of GOD pursued that perfi-
 “ dious *apostate*.

An. Christi
 33.
 Tiber. 19.
 SECT.
 V.
 Acts i. 18,
 &c.

“ With the hire of his treachery did the *chief-priests* buy the
 “ potter’s field ^l, to be a burying-place for strangers. For, though
 “ they had not scrupled to procure the murder of an innocent
 “ person; yet they superstitiously scrupled to put the money into
 “ the sacred treasury, because it was the price of blood.”

[Nay; it was a thing so well known at *Jerusalem* ^m, that the field
 was

Ver. 18. ^k Vid. Casaubon. exercit. 16. ad Annal. Baron. p. 527. Dr. Mead [in
 his *Medica sacra*, p. 96, &c.] has another interpretation. As to which, see *Raphelius*
 on Matth. xxvii. 5.

^l *Maundrel* describes this potter’s field, as situate on the west side of the valley
 of *Hinnom*, and says that it is “ a small plat of ground, not above thirty yards long,
 and about fifteen broad.” Half of it is taken up, by a square fabric, twelve yards high,
 which the *Armenian christians* use as a charnel-house. [See *Maundrel’s travels*,
 p. 101.]

Ver. 19. ^m Some have thought “ that ver. 18, 19. were St. Luke’s words, and no
 part of St. PETER’s speech.” As to the 18th *verse*, I think it a part of St. PETER’s
 speech, which ought to be joined to ver. 20. and that the 19th *verse* ought to be
 read in a *parenthesis*.

It is true, it may be alleged, “ that St. PETER could have had no occasion to in-
 “ form that audience of *Judas* his returning the money, which he had received for
 “ betraying his master; nor of his murdering himself, in his despair and anguish:
 “ because these things were notorious, and they must all have known them.” But
 to this it may be easily and justly answered, that known facts are often related, a-
 mong persons who are well acquainted with them, in order to introduce some thing
 farther, or to ground something upon such facts. And St. PETER seemeth to have
 mentioned these things with these very views.

But that the 19th *verse* containeth the words of St. Luke, the *historian*, and are no
 part of St. PETER’s speech, but ought to be read in a *parenthesis*, as giving a more full
 account and confirmation of so remarkable an event; appeareth most likely to me,
 for the following reasons. (1.) The buying the field seemeth to be mentioned, as a
 thing, that had happened long ago; which was formerly known to the inhabitants of
Jerusalem; and that the name *Hakeldama* had continued down to that day. Now,
 this is a circumstance, that will much better suite the time of St. Luke’s writing the
history, than the time, in which St. PETER is supposed to have made this speech;
 namely, a few weeks after the thing happened; and, possibly, on that very day, on
 which CHRIST ascended. And what confirmeth this very much, is, that St. *Mat-*
thew,

An. Christi was bought with the price of CHRIST's bloodⁿ, that the very field
 33. Tiber. 19. itself hath been from that time called *Hakeldama*; which word, in
 the *syro-chaldaic*, and particularly, in the *Jerusalem, dialect*, signifieth
 SECT. V. the field of blood.]

Acts i. 19, &c. "This *Judas*, I say, was formerly an APOSTLE, and is now re-
 markably degraded. And no wonder that such signal judgments
 (as king *David*, the progenitor of the MESSIAH, did long ago
 prophetically denounce against his treacherous friends^o, and par-
 ticularly against *Achitophel*) should fall upon him, who so perfi-
 diously betrayed that great and excellent person, the MESSIAH
 himself, who was both king *David's* son and lord. For, of such
 "infa-

thew, who wrote his *gospel* some years after CHRIST's ascension, hath used the very
 same phrase; and said, that "the field was called *the field of blood*, unto that very
 day." [Matth. xxvii. 8.] (2.) It's being said "that the field was called *Hakeldama*,
 τῇ ἰδίᾳ διαλέκτῳ αὐτῶν, in their own proper tongue, or dialect. This might very pro-
 perly have been said by St. *Luke*, who is reckoned to have been a native of *Antioch* in
Syria, who very well understood, and perhaps commonly used, the *greek language*;
 though, if he used the *syriac*, in the *Antiochian dialect*, as his common language,
 the argument will still hold good: Especially if it be considered that he was now
 writeing in *greek*, for the use of the *gentile christians* in general, and more immedi-
 ately of *Theophilus*, who (very likely) did not understand the *syro-chaldaic*. In such a
 case, it was necessary that he should explaine himself, when he used a word from a
 different language, or dialect.

I know it may be said, "that the *dialects* of *Galilee* and *Jerusalem* differed so much,
 that St. PETER's speech, or pronunciation, discovered him, at *Jerusalem*, to be a
 "Galilean." [Matth. xxvi. 73.] "And that one of the *Targums*, and *Talmuds*, was
 written in the *Jerusalem dialect*; and from thence called the *Jerusalem Targum*, and
 "Talmud."

But I question whether the *dialects* of *Galilee* and *Jerusalem* differed much in the
 writeing, though they appear to have differed in the pronunciation of the words.
 And, as to the *Jerusalem Targum* and *Talmud*, they differed from the others; as the
 others were written in the *dialects*, which the *jews* used in the distant, and especially in
 the eastern, dispersions.

ⁿ It is Dr. *Lightfoot's* conjecture, "that the potter's field was the place, where
 "Judas hanged himself; and that it was not onely bought with the money, for which
 "he had sold his LORD and master; but stained also with the traitor's blood." [See
Lightfoot's works, vol. 2. p. 640.] Others have been of the same opinion: [Vid. *Grot.*
& Wetstein. in loc.] This would make the reason of giving it the name of *the field*
of blood, still stronger, and more emphatical. And, perhaps, this may seem to some
 to be the reason here assigned, by St. *Luke*, of the field's being so called; and that,
 by the current of the story, in this place, it doeth look, as if he had murdered him-
 self, in the field, which was purchased with his own money; and that his blood be-
 ing shed there, had occasioned it's being called *the field of blood*. However; Matth.
 xxvii. 7, 8. it is assigned as the only reason for it's haveing that name, that it was
 bought with the price of CHRIST's blood; and, as the more remote antecedent is fre-
 quently referred to; and this text may be so understood, I take that to have been
 the true and onely reason of this appellation.

Ver. 20. ^o Psal. xli. 9.

“ infamously wicked persons, it is said, *Psal. lxxix. 25. Let their* An. Christi
 “ *habitation be desolate; and let no man dwell in their tents. And* 33. Tiber. 19.
 “ *again, Psal. cix. 8. Let his days be few, and let another take his*
 “ *office.* Which expressions of the *royal prophet* are exactly appli- SECT. V.
 “ cable to the present case. — Wherefore, my advice is, that, see- Acts i.
 “ ing *Judas* his place is thus become vacant, you would consider 20, &c.
 “ how to supply it. The grand qualification required, is, that it
 “ be one of the first, or most early, disciples of OUR LORD, who
 “ hath been commonly with us, from the time of *John's* baptism,
 “ and through the whole course of JESUS his ministry, even unto
 “ the day of his ascension: One, who knew OUR LORD very well
 “ before his death, and hath seen, and conversed with, him, since his
 “ being risen again: that he may be a competent and unexceptionable
 “ witnesse, unto the world, of JESUS his life, doctrine, miracles, and
 “ death; and, particularly, of his resurrection from the dead.”

According to the proposall of St. PETER, and the other ten APO-
 STLES, the rest of the one hundred and twenty chose two, out of
 their own number, and presented them to the APOSTLES; who
 refered the determination to the divine providence, by prayer, and
 casting lots; that GOD himself, who had chosen the other eleven,
 might point out, which of these two should be added, to complete
 their number again. — The persons nominated, were, *Joseph* called
Barsabas^p, and *Matthias*.

They put their names into one urn, and the word APOSTLE and
 a blank lot into another urn^q. And then they addressed themselves
 unto the LORD JESUS, by prayer, in the following manner: “ Thou,
 “ LORD, who knowest the hearts of all men, and canst tell which
 “ of these two, now presented before thee, is fittest to share with
 “ us, in the great office of the *apostolate*; decide thou accordingly;
 “ and point thou out, unto us, which of them must supply that
 “ place, from which *Judas*, by his own treachery and wickedness,
 “ hath

Ver. 23. ^p *Joseph called Barsabas.*] That this *Joseph*, surnamed *Barsabas*, was a
 different person from *Joses*, surnamed *Barnabas*, mentioned *Acts* iv. 36. will, I think
 appear probable, when it hath been considered, (1.) That the character of *Barnabas*
 is given, *Acts* iv. as if he had no where been mentioned before. (2.) It is much more
 likely that the MSS. which read alike, in both places, should be led into the mistake,
 by the similitude of the names, than that the other MSS. should read the names diffe-
 rently, without finding them so, in the copies, from which they were transcribed. (3.)
 This *Joseph* was surnamed *Justus*. But we no where find that *Barnabas* was sur-
 named *Justus*. [Compare, with this, the notes upon the history præfixed to St. James,
 p. 7, 8.]

^q Vid. *Grot.* in vers. 26.

An. Christi^{33.} "hath degraded himself, and is since gone to the place appointed
Tiber. 19. "for him; that he may receive the due reward of his deeds".

SECT. V.
Acts i. 25, &c. Then they drew forth the lots; and *Matthias* his name came up with the lot, on which was writen the word APOSTLE. And, from that time, he was looked upon, by the general consent of the *disciples*, as of the same rank and order with the other APOSTLES. And, thus the number of the APOSTLES of the circumcision (which, in conformity to the number of the tribes in *Israel*, was to be twelve^f) was filled up again, before *the effusion of the spirit*: that *the spirit* might fall upon *Matthias*, as well as upon the other eleven; and that he might not only have like *spiritual gifts* and *miraculous powers*; but that they might be conferred, at the same time, and in the same conspicuous and honorable manner.

S E C T. VI.

ST. LUKE wrote the *book*, which we commonly call *the acts of the APOSTLES*. But I greatly question whether he gave it any title. And I think they, that have since given it a title, might, with much more propriety, have called it, [*The history of the first planting of the christian religion.*] For, it is evident, St. LUKE never designed it as a full and *complete history* of all the APOSTLES, and of all their *acts*, labors, and travels: but only as a just and concise specimen of what doctrine they preached, to what sort of persons they addressed themselves, what arguments they made use of, with what evidences their

Ver. 25. ^f *Gone to the place appointed for him.*] It was a *maxim* among the *jews*, "He, that betrayeth an *Israelite*, shall have no part in the world to come." [See Dr. Lightfoot's works, vol. 2. p. 177: 640. Instead of [*ἰδίου*, *his own*,] the *Alexand.* ms. readeth [*δίκαιον*, *the just, or proper, place*:] but it is singular in that reading. However; in the sense, in which we have now taken the words, they were usual, among the primitive christians. In the *epistle*, ascribed to *Barnabas*, §. 19. he intimates, that good men go to the place appointed for them; ἐπὶ τὸν ὁρισμένον τόπον. And *Clemens Romanus* [*epist.* ad *Cor.* § 5.] saith, that St. PETER suffered martyrdom, and went into the place of glory, which was due to him. ἐπορεύθη εἰς τὸν ὁριζόμενον τόπον τῆς δόξης. And *Polycarp* useth a like expression, [*epist.* ad *Philippens.* §. 9.] *Ignatius*, likewise, [*epist.* ad *Magnēs.* § 5.] saith, "All things have an end; death and life are set before us, and every one must go into his own place. ἐκ τὸν ἰδίον τόπον μέλλει χαρῆν." Compare, with this, what OUR LORD himself had said of *Judas*, Matth. xxvi. 24. John vi. 70, 71. and xvii. 12. [See, also, Dr. *Whitby* on this place. And, for a different interpretation, see Sir *Norton Knatchbull*, *Le Cene's essay for a new translation, and others.*]

^f Rev. xxi. 13, 14.

their mission and doctrine were attested; and some general account of the success, which they met with.

Accordingly; after some brief account of their commission, and of the effusion of *the holy spirit*, to qualify them for their great undertaking, *the history* of the conversion of the *jews* is very naturally fallen upon; in which he hath pointed out to us the various reception, which *christianity* met with, among them. In this part, St. PETER was a leading man. And, though the other eleven APOSTLES were all of them active, yet little is said about them: because, in telling us what St. PETER preached, and acted, he hath given us a sample of what they all preached, and acted.

The next period relateth to the conversion of the *devout gentiles*, whom I take to have been *profelytes of the gate*; and such as are, in the *fourth commandment*, called *strangers within the gates of the jews*. And here, again, St. PETER led the way, by converting *Cornelius*, and his company.

But, when the *sacred historian* hath told us, that they were admitted into the christian church, without being first circumcised; and that, after St. PETER had led the way, other christians imitated his example, and made converts among the *devout gentiles* also; the *history* of St. PETER is very naturally dropped; because it doeth not appear that he ever preached to the *idolatrous gentiles*.

As, therefore, *the third grand period* containeth a brief account of the conversion of *idolatrous gentiles*; and St. PAUL shone as brightly in that sphere, as St. PETER had done, through the two former periods; the *history* of that great APOSTLE of the *gentiles* is there pursued; — whose convert, very probably, St. LUKE was; but certainly his companion and fellow-laborer, in the great undertaking; and concerned in many of the transactions, which he himself hath recorded.

As the greatest part of the world were then *idolatrous heathens*, and the greatest number of christians, since that, have been of the race of the *idolatrous gentiles*; this part was justly the most enlarged upon: because the doctrine, which is suited to their circumstances, is of the greatest and most extensive concern.

But, after we have had a full account of numbers of the *idolatrous gentiles* being brought off from their idolatry, and received into the christian church, without their submitting to any part of the *law of Moses*, (together with some intimation of the behavior of the *jews*, upon that occasion; — and that the *devout gentiles* were defended from any farther subjection to the *law of Moses*; —) and a

suffi-

An. Christi
33.
Tiber. 19.
SECT.
VI.
Acts i.
ult.

An. Christi sufficient number of instances given, to illustrate what doctrine was
 Tiber. 19. ^{33.} preached to those *idolatrous gentiles*, with what evidences it was
 confirmed, with what success it was attended, and how the APOSTLE
 SECT. VI. *of the gentiles* and his companions were treated; — after St. LUKE,
 Acts i. I say, had given us a specimen of these things, he finished *the his-*
 ult. *tory*. Though it appeareth, that he himself was with St. PAUL,
 long after; and could, very probably, have carried down *his history*
 to the martyrdom of that *great APOSTLE*.

But, having given us a perfect idea of *the christian doctrine*, and
 of its evidences; and pointed out the manner and method made
 use of, which was suited to the cases of the persons, to whom they
 addressed themselves; he hath finished his design. And (after a care-
 ful and repeated examination of it) I may venture to say, that he
 hath done it judiciously and accurately. For, if he had been ever
 so prolix, he could onely have heaped up more instances of the same
 kind. Whereas; by his brevity, he hath admirably consulted the
 general good.

As St. *Luke* hath pointed out the method, we shall divide *this*
history into *three books*.

BOOK I. Will contain an account of the spreading of the *gospel*
 among the *jews* onely; *that is*, from the year of OUR LORD, ac-
 cording to the *vulgar æra*, 33. to the year 41. and from *Acts*
 second, to the tenth, *chapter*.

BOOK II. Will contain an account of the spreading of *christianity*,
 among the *devout gentiles*, (commonly called, by the *jews*, the *pro-*
selytes of the gate;) together with its farther progress among the
jews; *that is*, from the year of the *vulgar æra* 41. to the year
 44. — and from *Acts* tenth, to the thirteenth, *chapter*.

BOOK III. Will contain an account of the spreading of *christianity*
 among the *idolatrous gentiles*; (together with its farther progress,
 among the *jews*, and *proselytes of the gate*.) *Acts* thirteenth, to the
 end of *that book*; — and from the year of the *vulgar æra* 44. to
 the year 63.

This period did, indeed, last 'till the year *seventy*, when the city
Jerusalem. and the *jewish polity*, were destroyed; which put an end
 to the division of the converts, into those of *jews*, *proselytes of the*
gate, and *idolatrous gentiles*.

The end of the INTRODUCTION.

T H E
H I S T O R Y
O F T H E
F I R S T P L A N T I N G
O F T H E
C H R I S T I A N R E L I G I O N, &c.

B O O K I.

Which containeth an account of the spreading of the gospel among the jews onely; — from the year of OUR LORD, according to the vulgar æra, 33. to the year 41. — and from Acts second, to the tenth, chapter.

C H A P. I.

Concerning the effusion of the holy spirit; and what gifts and powers were thereby conferred. Acts ii. 1,—4.

S E C T. I.

On the day of pentecost, the law had been given from mount Sinai. On that day, the holy spirit was poured out, upon the APOSTLES, and their company. Upon which, they were illuminated; and received, particularly, the gift of tongues.

IF the plan of man's redemption was laid, before-hand, by the infinite, and unerring, wisdom of GOD; we may expect to find it carried on regularly, and with vast and surprizing succeſſe. — Let the following circumstances, therefore, be carefully and impartially considered.

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E

That

An. Christi
33.
Tiber. 19.
Book I.
Chap. I.
Sect. I.
Acts ii. 1.

An. Christi

33.
Tiber. 19.

Book I.

Chap. I.

Sect. I.

Acts ii. 1.

That OUR LORD arose again from the dead, and ascended into heaven, hath been particularly related above. When the *seventh sabbath* from the *passover* was ended, and the next day, or (which is the same thing) the first day of the next week^a, was completely come^b; *that is*, fifty days after OUR LORD's resurrection, and ten days after his ascension; the APOSTLES, and (as I apprehend) their company also; *namely*, all the hundred and twenty, were unanimously assembled^c, in their upper room, with the doors bolted, for fear

Ver. 1. ^a *The first day of the next week;*] *that is*, the LORD'S-DAY, as it is called, Rev. i. 10. On the first day of the week, OUR LORD arose from the dead; on that day of the week, he appeared to his APOSTLES, when they were assembled, for two weeks successively; and, on the first day of the week, the holy spirit was first poured out, upon the APOSTLES, and their company. On that day of the week, used the apostles and primitive christians to assemble, for religious worship. And, from their custom and example, which was approved by CHRIST himself, and who must needs have known his mind and will, the christian church still continueth to assemble, on that day, for religious worship.

The observation of *that day* was not introduced, by a strict and positive command; because that might have been attended with some bad consequences. For instance; Suppose such slaves, as were converted to christianity, in that first age, had been expressly commanded, by the APOSTLES, to observe the first day of every week; their masters would have reflected upon christianity, as robbing them of their property, and breaking in upon their civil rights. But it was (with great wisdom) gradually and mildly introduced. And so polygamy, by being first condemned, in the bishops, deacons, and deaconesses, did gradually vanish in the christian church. — If any one would see the primitive custom, with respect to the observation of the first day of the week, let him consult John xx. 19; 26. Acts xx. 6, 7. 1 Cor. xvi. 1, 2. Justin. Martyr. apolog. 2. p. 98, 99. oper. Paris. edit. 1636.

^b *Was completely come.*] Deut. xvi. 9. Lev. xxiii. 15, 16. The jews used to begin their days, about six a-clock, in the evening; and reckon 'till that time, the next evening; according to Gen. i. 5. By saying, therefore, [that the day of pentecost was fully come,] St. Luke meant that the night was past, and the light of the next morning begun. [See, also, Dr. Lightfoot's curious observations on this place, vol. 1. of his works, p. 746, 747.]

^c It is said, Acts i. 14, 15. of all the hundred and twenty, *πάντες ἕσαν — ὁμοθυμαδόν*, &c. All these met with one accord, to choose an APOSTLE, &c.

The history is continued; (as would appear more plainly, if we had not divided it into chapters and verses;) and, of the same company, it is said here again, *ἕσαν πάντες; ὁμοθυμαδόν ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ, they were all met together, with one accord, in the same place*, when the holy spirit was poured down upon them.

It is probable all these hundred and twenty were along with them, when the holy spirit was poured down, a second time. [Acts iv. 23.; 31.] And it is evident, from Acts vi. 3. that several (besides the APOSTLES) were full of the holy spirit. Which is the very phrase, in the text, when the spirit was now poured out. And a phrase, which, in other places, signifieth, that the spirit was conferred, in the most honorable manner, as well as in a greater degree; *that is*, that it was given immediately from heaven, and not by the laying on of the hands of the APOSTLES.

Again; why might not the holy spirit fall down upon all the hundred and twenty, as well as upon Cornelius, and his company? Acts x. 44, 45, 46.

It

fear of the *jews*; and there they were spending their time in prayer, and other acts of devotion.

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It Book I.
Chap. I.
Sect. I.
Acts ii. 1.

It is objected, indeed, "That the APOSTLES are the persons last mentioned, *Acts i. ult.* compared with *chap. ii. 1.*"

Answer. It is allowed, they are so. But it is not here said, "that all the APOSTLES were met together with one accord." On the contrary, *the historian* here useth the very phrase, which he had used, *Acts i. 14, 15.* to intimate that he is still speaking of the same persons; and proceeding to show what happened to *them*, after the election of *Matthias*, and the completing the college of APOSTLES of the circumcision. The nearest antecedent is far from being always referred to. *Gen. iv. 9, 10.* And the lord said unto Cain, "Where is Abel, thy brother?" And he, [that is, Cain] said, "I know not. Am I my brother's keeper?" And he [that is, the lord,] said, "What hast thou done? &c." *Gen. xviii. 7, 8, 9.* And Abraham ran unto the herd, and fetched a calf tender and good, and gave it unto a young man. And he [the young man] hastened to dress it. And he [Abraham] took butter and milk, and the calf, which he had dressed, and set it before them. And he stood by them, under the tree. And they did eat. And they said unto him, "Where is Sarah thy wife?" And he said, "Behold, in the tent." [See the preface to Mr. Thomas Moore's discourse, concerning the priesthood of Jesus Christ.] Again; *Philemon, ver. 2.* Archippus was the person last mentioned; and yet the church, there saluted, was not in his house, but in the house of *Philemon*; who is the principal person addressed, though not the nearest antecedent. [See on *1 John v. 20.*] In like manner, are the APOSTLES mentioned, *Acts i. ult.* that is, only incidentally. For, if we take *the history* in it's connection, it is evident, that the hundred and twenty are the persons, spoken of, in the current of that history, from *Acts i. 15, &c.* Of them, it is said, "that, upon St. PETER's proposal, they chose out two, from among themselves; and presented them to the APOSTLES; that one of them might succeed, in the place of Judas the traitor. And, when they had chosen two; and God had, by lot, determined that, of the two, *Matthias* should be the person; then, it is said, that he was numbered with the eleven APOSTLES."

The historian now proceedeth, and declareth, that "they were all met again, with one accord, when the holy spirit came upon them;" that is, (as appeareth to me) all the company, of which he had been speaking, in the current of the former discourse. [See *Miscellanea sacra, vol. I. p. 101, 102.*]

(2.) It is objected, that some MSS. read here, πάντες [vel ἀπαντες] οἱ ἀποστόλοι, all the APOSTLES, &c. But the MSS. that so read, are not many, nor those of the greatest authority. And, what is a remarkable circumstance against this reading, is, that we do not find any of the fathers, nor any of the versions, antient or modern, have followed it.

Dr. Mill hath very judiciously observed, that the MSS. which so read the words, seem to have had that addition, only for the sake of explaining what the transcribers thought the sacred historian intended. So that this reading will amount to no more, than the opinion of some few antient transcribers of the new testament.

(3.) It may be objected, "that the APOSTLES had the highest and the most of the spiritual gifts; and are taken notice of, as the onely persons, that preached to the multitude, which then came together."

Answer. It is allowed that the APOSTLES had the most, and the best, of the gifts of the spirit. But, for all that, the other disciples might have some inferior gifts, and those granted them, at the same time; in what measure, and proportion, GOD saw fit. For there were diversities of gifts and operations, though they all proceeded from one and the same spirit. And the spirit could easily distinguish, between the APOSTLES, and others; though they were all in the same room, and company.

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Book I.

Chap. I.

Sect. I.

Acts ii. 2.

It was about fifteen hundred years before this, and (as many think) on this very day of the year, that *the law* was given of GOD, from *mount Sinai*^d, in the sight and hearing of all *Israel*; and attended, not only with a visible glory, but with pomp also, and terror.

And, now, the *new law of grace* is given to the APOSTLES, upon *mount Sion*^e, attended, likewise, with a glory; but communicated (agreeably to the nature of it) in a much more mild, gentle, and familiar, manner. For, while they were big with expectations of their ascended LORD's fulfilling his promise, in sending down the so often mentioned *gift of the holy spirit*, — there came, all on a sudden, a sound from heaven, as of a mighty, rushing, wind: and the breeze filled all the house, where they were assembled; as their doctrine was afterwards to fill the whole earth^f.

Then

As to the APOSTLES preaching first. That belonged to the dignity of their office: And, indeed, I am apt to think, that none of the hundred and twenty, except the APOSTLES, received *the whole scheme of the gospel-doctrine*, by that *effusion of the spirit*: though they might receive some inferior, and more particular, *revelations*, as well as *miraculous powers*.

But what seems much to confirm this account, of the presence of the hundred and twenty, is, St. PETER's speech, ver. 16, &c. of this chapter; where he asserteth, that, by that effusion of *the holy spirit*, the prophetic of *Joel* was accomplished; in which it was foretold, "that *the spirit* should be poured out, upon *women*, as well as upon *men*; that their *daughters* should prophesie, as well as *their sons*; and *the spirit* be given, to *maid-servants*, as well as *men-servants*, &c." For, I cannot conceive how that prophetic could be already fulfilled; unless *the spirit* was shed down, upon all the hundred and twenty; among whom it is expressly said, *Acts i. 14.* "there was *Mary the mother of JESUS*; and some other *women*, who were his disciples."

(4.) It may be objected, "that St. PETER, verses 19, 20. mentions the signs and fore-runners of the destruction of *Jerusalem*, as part of the prophetic of *Joel*. And yet these were not yet accomplished; but the accomplishment only approaching. In like manner, verses 17, 18. he might not only refer to what was come to passe; but also to the future pouring out of *the spirit*, which was then shortly to follow." To this I answer, That, from his manner of expressing himself, ver. 16. (as well as from the connection of the history mentioned above) I should rather be inclined to take verses 17, 18. to relate to what had happened; and that verses 19, 20. are added, partly for the sake of the exhortation, ver. 21. and partly because of their being joined to the other predictions in *Joel*; and were now, in a few years, to be accomplished.

^d See Archbishop *Usher's* annals of the old testament. Bishop *Patrick* on *Exod. xix. 1.* Dr. *Lightfoot's* works vol. i. p. 748, &c. *Ainsworth* on *Exod. xix. 11.* and *Wetstein. in loc.*

^e See the note on chap. i. 13.

Ver. 2. [*Filled all the house.*] When *Moses* had finished all things, according to the pattern shown him in the mount, it is said, *Exod. xl. 34, 35.* "that a cloud covered the tent of the congregation. And *the glory of the LORD* filled the tabernacle. And *Moses* was not able to enter into the tent of the congregation, because the cloud abode thereon: and *the glory of the LORD* filled the tabernacle." And, when king *Solo-*

Then there appeared, all over the room, in a visible and clear manner, the rays of a divine glory; like cloven, or separate, tongues of fire^g. And the fire, or divine glory, rested upon the head of each of the persons there assembled. Which form and appearance was a lively emblem of one of the most remarkable gifts then conferred.

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Chap. I.
Sect. I.

Acts ii. 3.
&c.

That the tongues were separated, might denote the multiplicity and variety of languages, which they should be able to speak; though, as all these proceeded from one and the same spirit, they should all agree in their doctrine. And, as the glory rested, for some time, upon them, it might shadow out the permanency of the gifts then bestowed; — in which, as well as in many other particulars, they excelled the old testament prophets^h.

Upon this effusion, all the company were filled with the holy spirit; as immediately, and most manifestly appeared. For, though they were men of a low education; and, before that, understood only their own native language; ye they now, all on a sudden, found themselves illuminated with a large stock of new knowledge, and able to speak it in a variety of languagesⁱ, which they had never learned,

Solomon had finished the building of the temple, and the ark of the covenant of the LORD was placed therein, it is said, “that the cloud filled the house of the LORD; so that the priests could not stand to minister, because of the cloud. For the glory of the LORD had filled the house of the LORD.” [1 Kings viii. 10, 11. 2 Chron. v. 13, 14.] In like manner, when Isaiah saw the LORD sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, it is said, “that his train filled the temple.” [Isai. vi. 1.] But, now, the divine presence had left the temple. And the glory of the LORD rested upon mount Sion; and filled the house, where the APOSTLES were assembled.

Ver. 3. ^g Like cloven, or separate tongues.] What, in our english bible, is rendered [fire,] Isai. v. 24. is, in the original, לשון אש, *leshon esh*, [a tongue of fire.] Our old english version hath preserved the allusion, and rendered the words, [lyke as fire lycketh up the strawe.] Tongues of fire properly signifie the points of flames; which move nimble, and lick like tongues. The antient Romans alluded to this, when they spoke of lambent flames; and we seem to have taken the phrase from them. Virgil's fiction, concerning the omen, which happened to Iulus, and by which Anchyses and Æneas were determined to leave Troy, — is so pertinent to the present purpose, that I cannot forbear transcribing it.

Ecce levis, summo de vertice visus Iuli
Fundere lumen, apex, tactuq; innoxia molli
Lambere flamma comas, & circum tempora pasci. *Æneid. lib. ii. l. 682, &c.*

Strange to relate, from young Iulus' head
A lambent flame arose; which gently spread
Around his brows, and on his temples fed.

Dryden.

^h 2 Kings iii. 15. Numb. xi. 25.

Ver. 4. ⁱ Some commentators of note, both among the antients and moderns, have main-

An. Christi 33. Tiber. 19. Book I. Chap. I. Sect. II. Acts ii. 4. learned, nor acquired, in a common way: but it was the immediate effect of the *spirit's* coming down upon them, as plainly appeared from their makeing use of their *surprizing gifts*, directly, and without delay; and their speaking, in the hearing of such as understood the several languages, which they spoke; — who were surprized to find them so suddenly possessed of such a compass of *knowledge*, and such an amazing variety of *tongues*.

John the baptist had often declared, “ that though he himself could baptize onely with *water*; yet the MESSIAH should baptize with the *holy spirit*, and with *fire*; or attended with a glory like a flame of fire.” And, now, was the promise fulfilled in it's season.

CH A P. I. S E C T. II.

The symbols of the Spirit; together with the external appearances, which accompanied this effusion.

THERE is no question to be made, but that GOD is ready, in all ages, to grant that *gracious assistance*, which is proper, in order to men's practising piety and virtue, or necessary to their working out their own salvation. But what we are now going to consider, is *the*

maintained “ that they *spoke* onely one language, (*that is, hebrew, or syro-chaldaic,*) “ but that the people *heard* them, every one, in their own language.”

This is really makeing *the miracle* to consist in *the hearing*, and not in *the speaking*; and seemeth so groundlesse, that it doeth not need any labored confutation. OUR SAVIOR promised, *Mark xvi. 17.* that they should *speake with new tongues*, &c. And, St. *Luke* here plainly asserteth, *ver. 4.* that they did *speake with other tongues*, or in other languages, besides their own native language. The same thing is either supposed, or plainly asserted, by St. *PAUL*. [*1 Cor. xii. 10; 28; 30. and xiv. 2; 4; 5; 6; 9; 13; 14; 18; 19; 21, 22, 23; 26, 27; 39.*] The mistake seemeth to have risen, from *ver. 6; 8.* where it is said, that every one of the foreigners *heard them speaking in their own native language*. But St. *Luke* did not there intend to say, that any one of the APOSTLES *spoke* more languages than one, at a time; nor, that they *spoke* one language, and the people *heard* one, or many others. But his plain and evident meaning, is, that one of them *spoke* one language, and another another language, and so on: and that different APOSTLES addressed themselves to men of different nations, at the same time:—or, that one APOSTLE addressed himself to men of different nations, one after another. By which means, all the foreigners *heard* their own native languages spoken, distinctly and intelligibly. And not onely the languages spoken, but *the christian doctrine*, also, plainly delivered unto them, in their own languages.

the miraculous assistance of the spirit, peculiar to the first age of the christian church.

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As this was the effusion of *the holy spirit*, which had been so often prophesied of, and promised: and so signal and plenteous an effusion, as that (notwithstanding all *the prophecies* and *miracles*, which had formerly proceeded from *the spirit of GOD*) *the holy spirit* was said, comparatively speaking, never to have been given before this: As this effusion, I say, was so remarkable, both as to it's *appearances*, and as to it's *effects*, we will consider them both; in order to clear up several *texts of scripture*, which take notice thereof, or allude thereto. — But more especially, to show what a vast alteration it made, in the minds of the APOSTLES; and how well qualified they, and their associates, hereby became, for successfully carrying on such a glorious work, as that of instructing an ignorant, and reforming a wicked, world.

Book I.
Chap. I.
Sect. II.
Acts II. 4.

The *external symbols* of *the spirit* may best be considered, at one view; as they will reflect a light upon one another, and help to explain several texts of *scripture*.

GOD could, undoubtedly, have communicated *the inward spiritual gifts*, without any *external symbols*, or *appearances*. But, as men are more strongly affected with what striketh upon the outward senses; GOD (who knoweth their frame) communicated *the spirit*, in this sensible, visible, manner.

The *external symbols* of *the spirit*, mentioned in *holy scripture*, are four; *air*, *fire*, *water*, and *oil*.

1. *The wind*, or *air*, is, in *scripture*, often used, as an emblem of *the gifts*, and *operations*, of *the spirit of GOD*; and as a *symbol* of *the divine presence*.

It is used by way of comparison, *John* iii. 8. “*The wind bloweth, where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof; but can’st not tell whence it cometh, nor whither it goeth: so is every one that is borne of the spirit.*” And, [*John* xx. 22.] OUR LORD, before his ascension, *breathed upon his APOSTLES*; thereby intimating in what manner they should afterwards receive *the holy spirit*.

Thus, [*Gen.* ii. 7.] when GOD had made the body of man of moist clay, “he *breathed* into his nostrils *the breath* [or *spirit*] of *life*.” And, upon the resurrection of the two witnesses, *Rev.* xi. 11. it is said, that “*the* [*breath* or] *spirit* of life entered into them again.” Nay; the word *spirit* doeth primarily signify *the air*, in which we *breathe*: though, in a figurative sense, it is used concerning intelligent

An. Christi gent beings. And thus *the holy person*, who inspired the APOSTLES
 33. and *prophets*, is called *the spirit of GOD*.
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Book I. *The air* is a most lively emblem of *the true christian spirit*, which
 Chap. I. is meek and gentle; invisible in it's secret causes and operations;
 Sect. II. yet most penetrating and active; diffusing itself to an incredible
 Acts ii. 4. extent; and of universal benefit, where it is received, and made the
 right use of.

The wind is, also, in *scripture*, used for a symbol of *the divine presence*; especially when the presence was more awful and reverential. Thus, [Gen. iii. 8.] our first parents, after they had eaten the forbidden fruit, "heard the voice of the LORD GOD walking in " the garden, *in the wind of the day*^a; and they were afraid, and " hid themselves, among the trees of the garden."

And, remarkable to this purpose, are the words of *Josephus*, that, upon the giving of *the law* from *mount Sinai*, "vehement winds came " rushing down; and that this was one of the tokens of the divine " presence."^b And *Josephus* his account is confirmed by the APOSTLE: [Heb. xii. 18.] who mentioneth [*tempest*], as well as many other awful things, accompanying the giving of the *law*, from *mount Sinai*.

And again; [Psal. xviii. 10.] *the symbols of the divine presence* are thus expressed: "He rode upon a cherub, and did fly; yea, he did fly, upon the wings of *the wind*." [See *Psalms* civ. 3, 4.]

In allusion, I suppose, to those former representations, we here find, that, when *the holy spirit* was given, "there came down, all on a sudden, the sound as of a *mighty rushing wind*."

It is not said, "that there really was a *strong wind*;" (such as those, which accompanied the giving of *the law*, from *mount Sinai*;) but onely, that it made a noise, and came on a sudden, *like a strong wind*.

And *the emblem*, in this view, was lively and pertinent. For, "the doctrine of the APOSTLES, though meek and gentle, was to " be mighty and powerful. Their sound was to go through the " earth, and their words to the ends of the world."

The holy angels, those bright and active ministers of the divine will, are sometimes compared to *wind*, as well as to *flames of fire*. But, here, *winds* and *flames* are made *symbols* of the presence of a superior

^a So לרוח הים, [*leruach hajom*,] ought to have been translated.

^b Ἄνεμοί τε σφοδροὶ — καὶ ἄγνοιον. [vel καὶ ἀφρονισο.] καὶ — ἐδήλουν τὴν παρυσίαν τοῦ Θεοῦ.
Joseph. Antiq. l. 3. c. 5. § 2.

perior spirit. Just as, in Ezekiel's vision, together with the whirlwind, and the flames of fire, there was, also, present the spirit of the LORD. [Ezek. i. 4, &c.]

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To conclude this head. As the wind was, of old, a token of the divine presence, so it was now. And, as GOD breathed, into the first Adam, the breath [or spirit] of life, when he imparted unto him that animal, terrestrial, life, which he was to convey to his posterity: so the second Adam, the LORD from heaven, breathed his quickening spirit, into his APOSTLES, as the seed and principle of a new life, to such as would imbrace their heavenly doctrine; — a life of holiness, which will terminate in a blessed and glorious immortality.

Book I.

Chap. I.

Sect. II.

Acts ii. 4.

Thus, was the spirit an earnest of their adoption, and a pledge of their future glory and happiness. [See on 1 Thess. i. 6.] And, by this quickening spirit of the LORD, we hope to be raised; and that he will again breathe, into us, the breath of life, at the last day, and in the resurrection of the just.

2. Another symbol of the holy spirit was fire, or flames of fire.

When the law was given from mount Sinai, there were not onely thunders, but lightnings, also. And the shechinah, or cloud of glory, which appeared so often to the patriarchs, and which conducted Israel through the wilderness, was like a cloud, by day; but like a pillar of fire, by night.

Something of the like nature, very probably, was the appearance, which attended the pouring down of the holy spirit, upon our LORD, after his baptism; namely, a glory, which surrounded his head, and hovered over him, for some time, as a dove fluttereth over her nest. — Such a glory did now attend the pouring out of the holy spirit, upon his APOSTLES, and their company. And such a glory did commonly, or, perhaps, always, attend the giving of the holy spirit, when that divine gift was poured down, upon any person, immediately from heaven, and without the laying on of the hands of the APOSTLES.

In some cases, the old testament prophets were so uneasy, when they listened their prophecies, that it is said, “The word of GOD was, in their hearts, as a burning fire, shut up in their bones; and they were weary with forbearing, and could not stay.”

But as a glory, like a flame of fire, accompanied the giving of the holy spirit, to the first christians, the allusion is much more strong and beautiful, when they are charged not to quench the spirit^d; but,

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on

^c Jer. xx. 9.

^d Μη σβέννῃτε, [See on 1 Thess. v. 19.]

An. Christi on the other hand, to *stir*, or *blow up*, that *sacred flame*^e. For, the
 33. *spiritual gifts*, like the *fire* upon the altar, could be kindled onely
 Tiber. 19. from heaven, but might be quenched by mere men; and did die
 Book I. out, and quite decay, if they were not fed with new *fewel*, here, upon
 Chap. I. earth. All manner of wickedness tended to *quench* those *sacred*
 Sect. II. *flames*, and all manner of virtue and piety to *blow up* and increase
 Acts ii. 4. them.

The light, the heat, the powerful efficacy, and purifying nature, of *flames*, rendered this a very proper *emblem* of the power and efficacy, the *light*, knowledge, and purity, of the *christian doctrine*; — as well as of that *sacred spirit*, which burned up the dross, purified the heart, and prepared the *christians* for a state of perfect purity and complete happiness.

3. The *effusion* of the *holy spirit* is, in *scripture*, frequently compared to the *pouring out of water*^f. [Isai. xlv. 3.] “I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground. I will pour out of my *spirit* upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine off-spring.” To this, there is an evident allusion, in the *prophecie*, [Joel ii. 28.] “I will *pour out my spirit* upon all flesh,” &c. Which *prophecie* (as St. PETER assured the *jews*) was now accomplished.

The eighth was the last day of the *feast of tabernacles*, and the greatest day of that feast. On that day, there was an holy convocation, among the *jews*, when a vast congregation of the people assembled together, at the temple. And then, it was their custom to fetch water, from the brook, *Siloam*; some of which they drank, with loud acclamations of praise and thanksgiving; and some of which they poured out, upon the altar, as a drink-offering unto GOD; both as a commemoration of the rock, that flowed, and followed them, in the wilderness, to relieve their thirst; and, as an oblation, joined with prayer for rain, against the following seed-time. — On that great day of the feast, JESUS (observing the usual solemnity, and alluding thereto,) stood in a convenient place, in the temple; and cried aloud, and in the hearing of the people: “If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink. For I will give him of my *spirit*, not onely enough to refresh him, but he shall be filled with it; and it shall plenteously overflow, like swelling
 ing

^e Ἀναζωπυρεῖν. [See on 2 Tim. i. 6.]

^f Besides the texts mentioned in this *history*, see Prov. i. 23. Ezek. xxxvi. 25, &c. and xxxix. 29. Isai. xii. 3. and lv. 1. Tit. iii. 5, 6. With which compare John iv. 14.

“ing rivers of living water.” That (as St. JOHN hath informed us, *John* vii. 39.) was an allusion to the plentiful effusion of the *holy spirit*, which was to be poured out, after OUR LORD’S ascension. And, on this day of *pentecost*, the promise was accordingly fulfilled.

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Acts ii. 4.

It is with the same allusion, that St. PAUL, [*1 Cor.* xii. 13.] saith, of the *christians*, who had the gifts of the *holy spirit*, that they had been all made to drink into one spirit,

They were, likewise, initiated into the *christian church*, by being baptized with water; which is called the washing of regeneration, and joined with the renewing of the *holy spirit*. [*Tit.* iii. 5.] And, as the *primitive christians*, after baptism by water, were generally baptized with the *holy spirit*; and that was the usual way, for the APOSTLES, to receive persons into the *christian church*, the spiritual kingdom of GOD among men; it was said, [*John* iii. 5.] “that, “unlesse a man was borne of water, and of the spirit, he could not “enter into the kingdom of GOD.”

The outward washing with water, in baptism, denoted that inward purity, which was (and still is) required of *christians*; their obligation “to cleanse themselves from all filthiness, both of flesh “and spirit; and to perfect purity, or holiness, in the fear of “GOD.”

And baptism was said to wash away their sins. For *christians* were required “to have their hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, as well as their bodies washed with pure water.” — And, upon this account, the church of CHRIST is said to be cleansed, by the washing of water, as well as by the word of GOD. Thus, the gift of the spirit is compared to water, because of it’s purifying, cleansing, quality. And, in allusion to the pouring out of water, this manner of communicating the spiritual gifts, is called the effusion of the *holy spirit*.

4. and lastly. The giving of the *holy spirit* is sometimes compared to the anointing persons with oil: — which was a thing much practised in the eastern countries.

Their kings^s, and sometimes their prophets^h, were inaugurated, by being anointed with oil; and the *jewish high-priests* were consecrated, at thirty years of age, by being washed with water, and anointed with oilⁱ. Accordingly; JESUS CHRIST, the prince of the kings of the earth, the prophet of the church, the great APOSTLE

F 2

and

^s 1 Sam. xvi. 13. Judg. ix. 8. 1 Kings xix. 16. ^h 1 Kings xix. 16.
Isai. lxi. 1. Luke iv. 18. ⁱ Exod. xxix. 4; 7. Lev. xxi. 10.

An. Christi and high-priest of our profession, — when he was about thirty years of age, was first washed with water, or baptized by John the baptist; and, after that, was farther set apart, for his high, sacred, and prophetic, office, by being anointed with the holy spirit, that oil of gladness, above his fellows. [Heb. i. 9. Psal. cx. 4, 5. Acts ii. 34, 35.] Hence had he the name of messiah, [or the Christ,] which signifieth the anointed. [Dan. ix. 25, 26. Isai. lxi. 1. Acts iv. 27.]

Thus, also, the christians, who had the gifts of the holy spirit, are said to have had an ointment from the holy one: [See on 1 John ii. 20.] and to have been anointed of GOD. [2 Cor. i. 21, 22.] By that unction, they were both instructed and comforted. [1 John ii. 27.] And hence they were called kings and priests, unto GOD, and the lamb. [Rev. i. 6.]

As the jews used to pour oil upon the first fruits, which they offered unto GOD, there might, perhaps, be some allusion to that custom, in the case of the first christian converts, who were the first-fruits of this new creation, and who had the first-fruits of the spirit. But the unction of kings and priests, is (I think) more generally alluded to.

These are the four symbols, or emblems, which the scripture mentioneth, or alludeth to, in speaking of the wonderful gifts of the holy spirit.

CH A P. I. S E C T. III.

The general division into spiritual gifts, and miraculous powers: and into those, that were peculiar to APOSTLES; and those, which were common to them, and other christians.

WE have already spoken of the symbols of the spirit. The effects of receiving the spirit come next to be considered. And they were either spiritual gifts, or miraculous powers.

By spiritual gifts, I understand “that inward illumination, which the disciples of JESUS, and especially the APOSTLES, received, upon the effusion of the spirit.” And, by the miraculous powers, I understand “those powers, by which the mighty and uncommon effects

" effects were performed, that often attended their speaking, or
" acting."

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By *the spiritual gifts*, they had a vast compasse of *knowledge* communicated, concerning doctrines, and languages; of which (before that) they were intirely ignorant. And all that I suppose them to have had, from *the spirit*, in the working of *a miracle*, was onely a *prophetic impulse* upon their minds, that, upon their speaking, or acting, so or so, a miracle would be worked; to rouse men's attention to, or confirm them in, *the christian doctrine*. Such an *impulse* may, indeed, not improperly, be ranked among *the gifts of the spirit*. But *the power*, which was exerted, in the working of *a miracle*, did not procede from *the christians*, but immediately from the LORD JESUS CHRIST; upon their invokeing his name, or pronouncing the person healed; or declaring that *the miracle* would be done, by his power^a.

There may be other reasons alleged, for the distinction between *spiritual gifts* and *miraculous powers*. For instance; The APOSTLES, and *the seventy disciples*, worked *miracles*, in our savior's life-time; and yet *the holy spirit* is said *not to have been then given*. [John vii. 39.] And the writers of the new testament do, themselves, frequently distinguish between *spiritual gifts* and *miraculous powers*; calling the first *the gifts of the holy spirit*; and the latter, by the name of *signs*, and *wonders*, and *various miracles*.

But, perhaps, this distinction may be still better understood, suppose we say, that *the illumination*, or *impulse*, which they had, in the working of *a miracle*, terminated in that particular act of *the divine power*. Whereas; by *the spiritual gifts*, they conveyed some *knowledge*, and delivered some truths, which tended to edification, or exhortation, or comfort. By *the miracles*, they might rouse men to attention; but, by *the spiritual gifts*, and by them alone, they could instruct, and enlighten, them.

The APOSTLES were *the ambassadors of GOD* to men. Now, *ambassadors* must have qualifications, and credentials, (as well as a commission;) in order to the successful execution of their high office. They had, indeed, seen OUR LORD; and were sufficiently qualified to be *witnesses* to the world of the truth and reality of his resurrection

^a It is said, Mark v. 30. Luke vi. 19. and viii. 46. that *δύναμις*, power, went out of JESUS. But I do not find such an expression ever used of his APOSTLES, or any of his disciples. Though, I confesse, that, by *the power* of OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, St. PETER was enabled to do something of the like nature. And, which was (to say the least) equally *miraculous*. [Acts v. 15, 16.] And so, likewise, St. PAUL. [Acts xix. 11, 12.]

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That the APOSTLES, and their associates, were men of integrity, and capable of observing, and relating, plain facts, appears from their whole *history*. But it is their *supernatural gifts*, and *miraculous powers*, of which we are now to give an account.

As the hundred and twenty are supposed to have been present, at this first and remarkable effusion of *the spirit*; and the visible glory rested upon them all; they are said to have been *all filled with the holy spirit*. But there were *diversities of gifts*, though they all proceeded from one and the same *spirit*. — The APOSTLES evidently appear to have had the most, and the choicest, *gifts* and *powers*. Some of the greatest and best of *the gifts* and *powers* were, indeed, peculiar to them. And others they possessed, in a greater degree, or in a superior manner.

Let us, therefore, (in order to view them distinctly) inquire,

I. Into *the spiritual gifts* and *miraculous powers*, which were granted unto the APOSTLES.

II. Into *the gifts* and *powers*, which were communicated unto other *christians*, also.

C H A P. I. S E C T. IV.

Concerning the spiritual gifts, which were communicated unto the APOSTLES.

THAT the APOSTLES were well acquainted with OUR LORD, before his death; and had full conviction of the truth and reality of *his resurrection*, so as sufficiently to enable them to be *his witnesses* unto the world; — hath been fully shown already.

But,

But, by *this effusion of the spirit*, they were qualified to teach *christianity* unto mankind; and to work *miracles*, in attestation to their mission and doctrine; — as well as to be *witnesses* of the facts.

The *supernatural gifts*, from which they had their inward *illumination*, come now to be considered; and, in the next *section*, we propose to consider their *miraculous powers*.

They were called *gifts*, from their being so styled, in the famous *prophecie*. [Psal. lxxviii. 18.] Where *the messiah* is prophesied of, as a mighty conqueror, ascending to heaven in triumph, receiving *gifts* from GOD, and distributeing them among his people. [See *Eph.* iv. 7, 8.]

The most full and particular account of their *gifts* and *powers*, is found, 1 *Cor.* xii. 8, 9, 10; 28, 29, 30. And, therefore, we may look upon that, as *the text*, which ought particularly to be explained. But there are, also, other hints, elsewhere, that deserve to be considered.

A view of the order, in which St. PAUL hath ranked *the gifts of the spirit*, 1 *Cor.* xii. chapter.

Verfes 8, 9, 10.	Verse 28.	Verfes 29, 30.
(1.) <i>The word of wisdom.</i>	(1.) <i>Apostles.</i>	(1.) <i>Apostles.</i>
(2.) <i>The word of knowlege.</i>	(2.) <i>Prophets.</i>	(2.) <i>Prophets.</i>
(3.) <i>Faith.</i>	(3.) <i>Teachers.</i>	(3.) <i>Teachers.</i>
(4.) <i>Gifts of healing.</i>	(4.) <i>Miracles, δυνάμεις.</i>	(4.) <i>Miracles, δυνάμεις.</i>
(5.) <i>Working of miracles.</i>	(5.) <i>Gifts of healing.</i>	(5.) <i>Gifts of healing.</i>
ἐνεργήματα δυνάμεων.		
(6.) <i>Prophecie.</i>	(6.) <i>Helps.</i>	} (6.) <i>Speakers of tongues</i> ^a .
(7.) <i>Discerning of spirits.</i>	(7.) <i>Governments.</i>	
(8.) <i>Divers kinds of tongues.</i>	} (8.) <i>Divers kinds of tongues</i> ^b .	} (7.) <i>Interpreters of tongues.</i>
(9.) <i>The interpretation of tongues.</i>		

I. Unto

^a *Speakers of tongues*, in the third list, may comprehend *prophecie*, *discerning of spirits*, and *divers kinds of tongues*, in the first list; inasmuch as these were generally the subjects treated of, by those who had *the gift of tongues*. For, besides exercising *the gift of tongues*, they prophesied, spoke the wonderful things of GOD, or magnified GOD. [See *Miscellan. sacr.* vol. I. over against p. 74. Mark xvi. 17. Acts ii. 11. and x. 46. and xix. 6.]

^b Perhaps the APOSTLE makes *divers kinds of tongues*, in the second list, answer both to *tongues*, and *the interpretation of tongues*, in the first.

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I. Unto the APOSTLES was communicated, by *the spirit, the word of wisdom*. So St. PAUL calleth it. 1 Cor. xii. 8. *that is*, “ a full and clear knowlege of the whole *scheme of the christian doctrine*; “ whereby they were *illuminated* themselves, and able to make o-
thers *wise unto salvation*.”

On this day of *pentecost*, they appear to have received that general part of *christianity*, which was common to all mankind; and that particular part of it, which related to *the jews*, and *profelytes of righteousness*, who were always looked upon, and treated, as *jews*. And, by farther effusions, and revelations, (which were communicated to some, or other, of the APOSTLES, as the state of things required) they had *the whole scheme of christianity*, with all the particulars; whether relateing to *jews*, or *gentiles*.

By *the word of wisdom*, I understand “ such a comprehensive view of *the christian doctrine*,” because, in this sense, St. PAUL hath used the phrase [*wisdom*,] and [*the wisdom of GOD*.] 1 Cor. i. 24. and ii. 6, &c. Eph. iii. 10. And St. PETER informeth us, that his brother PAUL wrote his *epistles*, according to *the wisdom given unto him*. [2 Pet. iii. 15, 16.]

In OUR LORD himself, were hid all the treasures of *wisdom*, and *knowlege*. [Col. ii. 2, 3.] And hence he is sometimes called *the wisdom of GOD*. [Luke xi. 49. compared with Matth. xxiii. 34.]

This I reckon to have been the highest *spiritual gift*, and to have been communicated to none but the APOSTLES. Because, in reckoning up *the gifts* themselves, it is set first, 1 Cor. xii. 8. And answereth to APOSTLES. For, we find, that, among the persons who had *the gifts*, they are placed the first in order, ver 28, 29. as haveing the greatest honor, and most excellent qualifications.

Hence it is they are called [*wise men*,] Matth. xxiii. 34. *compared with* Luke xi. 49.

This word of wisdom was communicated unto them, by *immediate revelation*, from OUR LORD, or from *the spirit*; and is, therefore, called by the name of *revelation*. [1 Cor. xiv. 6.] For it is true, of all the APOSTLES, “ that they neither received their *gospel*, from “ man, neither by man; but by *the revelation of JESUS CHRIST*, “ or the *illumination of the spirit*.” Whereas; even *superior prophets*, and *evangelists*, (not haveing *the word of wisdom*,) were to teach, what they had learned from the APOSTLES, “ unto faithful men, who should be able to teach others also.” [2 Tim. ii. 2.]

But, under *the word of wisdom*, I would, also, include *the greater prophecies*; that is, *the revelation of divers mysteries*, or grand
2 “ events,

“ events, relating to the spreading, corrupting, and restoring, *the An. Christi*
 “ *christian religion*; which could not have been known by any hu- ^{33.}
 “ man foresight.” For, (1.) OUR SAVIOR speaketh of it, as a ^{Tiber. 19.}
 thing peculiar to the APOSTLES, “ that, unto them, it was given, ^{Book I.}
 first, and immediately, to know *the mysteries of the kingdom of* ^{Chap. I.}
heaven.” [Matth. xiii. 11. Mark iv. 10, 11. Luke viii. 10.] (2.) ^{Sect. IV.}
 The whole scheme of *the gospel-doctrine* is called *the mystery of god-*
lineſſe, [1 Tim. iii. 16.] and *the wisdom of GOD in a mystery*,
 [1 Cor. ii. 7.] (3.) *The mystery of GOD’s calling the gentiles*, to be
 his people, without any subjection to *the law of Moſes*, is included,
 under the general name of [*wiſdom*]; as may be ſeen, by compare-
 ing the following texts: Eph. i. 8, 9, 10. Col. i. 9; 12, 13; 26,
 27, 28. and ii. 2, 3. (4.) *Theſe mysteries* are ſaid to have been
 communicated *by revelation*, [Gal. i. 12. Eph. iii. 3. Rom. xvi.
 25.] juſt as the former branch of *the word of wiſdom* is intimated to
 have been given, [1 Cor. xiv. 6.] (5.) None but APOSTLES ap-
 pear to have had *the revelation of thoſe grand mysteries*. For unto St.
 PETER was it firſt reveled, that *the devout gentiles* ſhould be taken
 into *the chriſtian church*, without any farther ſubjection to *the law of*
Moſes, than that, to which they had already ſubmitted. [Acts xth
 and xith chapters.] And to St. PAUL, that *the idolatrous gentiles*
 ſhould be accepted, without any ſubjection to *the Moſaic law*. This
 was one of *the mysteries of GOD*, of which he was a faithful ſteward.
 [1 Cor. iv. 1, 2.] And he often calleth it *a mystery*. [Rom. xvi. 25.
 Eph. i. 9. and iii. 3,—11. and vi. 19, 20. Col. i. 26, 27. and ii.
 2. and iv. 3. 1 Tim. iii. 9.] Unto him, alſo, was reveled *the myſ-*
tery of GOD’s caſting off the jews, the mystery of iniquity, or of *the*
revelation of the man of ſin, and ſon of perdition; whereby great
 corruptions ſhould, in the laſt days, be introduced into *the chriſtian*
church. [2 Theſſ. ii. 1, &c.] *the mystery of recalling the jews* into the
 church of GOD, and of the complete fulneſſe of *the gentiles*. [Rom.
 xi. 11, &c.] *the mystery*, that the laſt generation ſhould not die at
 all. [1 Cor. xv. 51.] And, finally, unto St. JOHN was reveled *the*
mystery of the ſeven ſtars, [Rev. i. 20.] *the mystery of GOD*, [Rev. x.
 7.] and *the mystery of Babylon, the woman, the beaſt, and the falſe*
prophet. [Rev. xvii. 5; 7, &c.]

But I have not found any clear and certain intimation, in the
 new teſtament, that ſuch *mysteries* were reveled, immediately, to
 any of *the ſuperior prophets*^c, or *evangelists*; much leſſe to any of *the*
 VOL. I. G *chriſtian*

^c There is one text, (namely, Eph. iii. 5.) which will be taken notice of, when
 we come to conſider *the gifts of the ſuperior prophets*.

An. Christi *christian brethren.* (6.) It is a considerable argument, (which hath already been just hinted at) when it is added, to what hath been said, that the order, in which things are ranged, 1 Cor. xii. 8; 28, &c. requireth that *the revelation of the mysteries*, or grand events relating to the christian church, should be reduced under the head of *the word of wisdom*; and looked upon, as peculiar to the APOSTLES. For, as *the word of wisdom*, ver. 8. is placed first, among *the spiritual gifts*; it must, of course, answer to APOSTLES, who are ranked the first among *the persons*, who had *the gifts*, ver. 28, 29, 30. And, consequently, under *that word of wisdom*, we ought to reckon all the branches of *the gift*, which was peculiar to APOSTLES. Whereas; if we place *the revelation of such mysteries*, under the second head; *namely, the word of knowledge*; it will answer to *superior prophets*; who do not appear to have had such revelations.

The APOSTLES (though honest, and sincere men) were slow of understanding, and greatly prejudiced. OUR LORD, during his ministry, had endeavored to open their understandings, by *parables*, and by other methods, gradually, and as they were able to bear it. But often, when he spoke, they understood him not; and the thing was hid from their eyes. They misunderstood the nature of *his kingdom*. And, though he had many things to say unto them, they could not then bear them. But, *when the spirit of truth* should come, he was not onely to bring to their remembrance what CHRIST had taught them; but to *lead them into all the truths*, that were necessary to their spreading *the gospel*. Accordingly; by *the first branch of the word of wisdom*, they had given them, immediately from heaven, and retained in their minds afterwards, through their whole lives, clearly and accurately, a more perfect *body of divinity*, than forty years close study can now give the most candid, sagacious, and industrious, *divine*; even though he hath their writings to guide and assist him.

Hereby they saw through their former mistakes, about CHRIST's person and offices. They could now easily reconcile *the prophecies*, which spoke of his humbled, and exalted, state. For, they were convinced, that, though he had emptied himself to come upon earth; yet, since that, he was exalted, at the right hand of GOD, and had all power given unto him, both in heaven, and upon earth. That *his preparatory kingdom* was not a *temporal*, but a *spiritual kingdom*, ruling over the consciences of men. His mean and afflicted life upon earth, and his undergoing such an ignominious death, appeared fully consistent with his being *the messiah*. For his resurrection, ascension,

cension, and pouring out of *the spirit*, had taken away all the infamy of the crosse; and light shone clearly through many of their grossest prejudices. They could now enter into the design of *the son of GOD's* coming down among men, and of his erecting a *kingdom of righteousness*; and saw plainly what part they were to transact, in erecting *that holy kingdom*.

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As *Moses* had the two tables of *the law*, and a pattern of all things, delivered unto him, in the mount; when he was about to erect *GOD's temporal kingdom*, in *Israel*; so the APOSTLES of OUR LORD and savior JESUS CHRIST, in order to erect *the spiritual kingdom of GOD*, among all nations, had a full and clear *revelation* of the nature and laws of *that kingdom*, communicated unto them, by *the spirit*, who enlarged their capacities, and filled them with knowlege, for themselves, and for the world.

To the second branch of *the word of wisdom*, the *revelations*, which GOD made to some of the *superior old testament prophets*, bear a very great resemblance: I mean, *the prophecies*, concerning the greater events, which would affect *the jews*, and particularly concerning *the kingdom of the messiah*.

By this second branch of *the word of wisdom*, the APOSTLES could comfort *the christians*, under many and threatening prospects, with the full assurance that *christianity* would prevail and flourish, notwithstanding all discouragements and oppositions whatever; — as well as could, in the mean time, declare *the terms of acceptance*, both of *jews* and *gentiles*; which terms were exactly suited to the state, in which they were, antecedent to their imbraceing *christianity*.

By this *word of wisdom*, in the full and most comprehensive latitude of it, the APOSTLES became the common funds of *christian knowlege*. For *the primitive christians* did, all of them, receive *christianity*, from the APOSTLES, mediately or immediately; *superior prophets* and *evangelists* not excepted^a.

And, though we do not receive *christianity* so immediately from them, as to hear the word at their mouths: yet we may learn, from *their writings*, that *doctrine*, which they received from OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST; and delivered unto the world, faithfully, as they received it, from him; GOD also bearing them witness, both by signs, and wonders, and divers miracles, and gifts of the HOLY SPIRIT, according to the divine good pleasure.

The books of the new testament were, most of them, written by the APOSTLES. And, as they had this *illumination of the spirit* continually

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^a John xvii. 20. 2 Tim. ii. 2. and iii. 14.

An. Christi nually in their minds, during the remaining part of their lives, ever
 33. ready to inform and direct them what was, or what was not, *the*
 Tiber. 19. *true christian doctrine*; we may depend upon *their writings*, as con-
 Book I. taining an infallible account of *the true christian revelation*.

Chap. I. St. Mark, and St. Luke, were not APOSTLES. And, therefore,
 Sect. IV. *those books of the new testament*, which they wrote, are said, by some
 Acts ii. 4. of *the antients*, to have been written, from the [*doctrine, or*] preach-
 ing of some of the APOSTLES. And other of *the fathers* inform
 us, that, after they were written, they were read and approved, by
 one, or more, of the APOSTLES*. Accordingly; "*christians* are
 " said to be built upon the foundation of the APOSTLES and *pro-*
 " *phets*; JESUS CHRIST himself being the chief corner-stone."
 [Eph. ii. 20.] And, [Rev. xxi. 14.] in the vision, which appeared
 to one of the APOSTLES of *the circumcision*, the walls of *the new Je-*
rusalem were represented as twelve; upon the foundations of which
 were inscribed the names of *the twelve APOSTLES of the LAMB*.

Thus, according to the infinite and amazing wisdom of GOD,
 when the world stood in need of an universal reformation, GOD did
 not see fit to inspire every *man*, or every *christian*. But he *illumi-*
nated the APOSTLES, with *the doctrine*, which is calculated to pro-
 mote virtue and piety. And, by their preaching, or writings, he
inlightened the earth. For, *the scheme of christianity*, which we have,
 in the new testament, unto this day, came originally from the APO-
 STLES, who were the only persons that were favored with *the word*
of wisdom.

II. To the APOSTLES was communicated, by *the spirit*, what
 St. PAUL calleth *the word of knowlege*, 1 Cor. xii. 8. *that is*, "a full,
 " and clear, comprehension of the scope and design of *the law*, and
 " of *the prophets*. And a thorough understanding of the confirmation,
 " which the old testament gave to *christianity*."

In this sense, hath St. PAUL used the word, *γνῶσις*, *knowlege*,
 [Rom. ii. 20. with which, compare 1 Tim. vi. 20.]

I cannot easily be persuaded, indeed, that the old testament had,
 besides the direct and literal sense, an hidden and spiritual meaning;
 which could not be found out, without *a new revelation*. The true
 design and meaning might be hid, from the careless and prejudiced:
 but, surely, *a revelation* could answer no great end, that should want
another revelation to explaine it, in it's most material branches. I
 am, therefore, persuaded, that a diligent and unprejudiced inquirer
 might

* See the essay on *inspiration*, annexed to 1 Timothy.

might have understood the design of *the law* and *the prophets*; and have comprehended the sense of the most material and important prophecies. [Acts xvii. 11.] But, notwithstanding all this, *the word of knowlege* was, as things then stood, a *spiritual gift* of great use and advantage. For, the APOSTLES themselves had been bred up in low occupations; and had not had leisure to study and search into *the old testament revelation*, with that care and exactness, which the case required. Nay; (what is more) not onely they, but the learned and leading men among the *jews*, [1 Cor. ii. 7, &c.] and even all the nation of the *jews* in general, were greatly præjudiced, and were gone into a wrong interpretation of *the grand prophecies*; overlooking such *prædictions*, as regarded the humble state of *the messiah*; and expecting a *temporal prince*, to exalt the grandeur of their nation. — In such circumstances, it could not be expected, that the APOSTLES should have understood the scope and design of *the law* and *the prophets*, without *the illumination of the spirit*, to lead them into those truths; much less could they, without extraordinary assistance, have been supposed to have convinced numbers of other *jews* of their mistakes, and to have led them into a right and just conception of the true intention of their *antient prophets*.

A long præparation of learning ^f and study would not have led them into so full and accurate a *knowlege* of the general design of the old testament, and of the meaning of particular prophecies. And, yet it was necessary that the APOSTLES should have had such a thorough *knowlege* of the old testament. For, they were not onely to teach *christianity*, which was founded upon *facts*; but they were to build up believers in their most holy faith. And they actually did so, by justly explaineing *the old testament prophecies*; and by removing those scruples, which arose in the minds of *the christians*, who had been *jews*, or *proselytes of the gate*, from a misunderstanding of those *antient prophecies*. Nay; they could not onely satisfy the honest inquirer, but convince gainfayers; and stop the mouths of *the unbelieving jews*, and of the perverse *judaizeing christians*^g, who endeavored to subvert the minds of the other *christians*, and to draw away disciples after them, from an unjust interpretation of *antient revelations*^h.

By

^f The APOSTLES were not (before this) acquainted either with *the antient hebrew*, in which *the books of the old testament* had been written; nor with *the greek*, which was then the onely *version*. For, as to *the targums in Chaldee*, they were *paraphrases*, and not *versions*.

^g 1 Tim. i. 7.

^h Tit. i. 9, 10, 11.

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By this gift, the APOSTLES saw that all that vast *apparatus* of the law, and the prophets, was for the carrying on of one grand design, regularly and uniformly; — that the figures, shadows, and prophecies, for a succession of many ages, did, at last, center in JESUS of Nazareth; and in that most perfect revelation, which GOD gave to mankind, by him.

The APOSTLES did, indeed, always found *christianity* upon facts; and then preached the *christian doctrine*, according to the word of wisdom. But they, also, confirmed the doctrine, by appealing to the old testament, when they attempted to convert jews, or proselytes of the gate; and afterwards removed the scruples, which arose in their minds, concerning the intention of former revelations. For, as these two sorts of persons acknowledged the authority of the scriptures of the old testament, and were acquainted with those antient and sacred writings; — it was necessary to clear up to them the connection between *christianity* and those preceding revelations.

But, as the idolatrous gentiles neither acknowledged the authority of the jewish canon, nor were acquainted with what it contained; we never find the APOSTLES appealing to the prophecies, in converting them. But, when those idolatrous gentiles had imbraced the christian religion; and were told that the things had long before been predicted, which were now come to pass; it was a circumstantial and confirming evidence, to show them that it was so, and to point out to them the connection between *christianity* and those former revelations. — Which method, the APOSTLES, with great justness and propriety made use ofⁱ.

We are here considering the word of knowledge, as a gift, which was bestowed upon the APOSTLES. And they seem plainly to have had it, all of them; and in the highest degree. But that it was not peculiar to the APOSTLES, will be shown, when we come to speak of the spiritual gifts conferred upon the other disciples.

III. The APOSTLES had the gift of discerning spirits.

Under this general head, may be comprehended three remarkable and distinct branches of divine illumination.

(I.) “A being able to discern, or distinguish, by what spirit any man spoke, who pretended to prophesying: that is, whether he spoke onely of himself, from an evil spirit, or by an impulse of the spirit of GOD.” This seems to have been the thing intended, in the new testament, by the phrases; *proving, trying, or discerning, of spirits*. — In order to understand the nature of this gift, it ought

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ⁱ Rom. xvi. 25, 26.

to be considered, that other *christians* had *revelations*, as well as the APOSTLES; and sometimes particular *revelations*, which were not communicated to the APOSTLES, by *the spirit*^k. Now, it was of great service, to be able, in such cases, to distinguish, whether such a person spoke, onely from his own private suggestion, from *an evil spirit*, or from *the spirit of GOD*.

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Some of the *inferior christians* had *this gift*; by which they could try doctrines, and judge whether they were *divine revelations*, or agreeable to *divine revelations*. But, though the APOSTLES (who had *the word of wisdom*) had no need, in many cases, to make any such use of *this gift*, because they had *the whole scheme of christianity* always, in their minds, as a standard, by which to try, and judge of, all doctrines; — yet, where there was a *prædiction* of some future event, or a particular *revelation*, which had not been discovered to them before: In such cases, the APOSTLES might, with advantage, make use of this extraordinary gift. For, many *false apostles*, and *false prophets*, did, (even in that first age of the church) go out into the world: and acted so subtly; that (if possible) they would have deceived the very elect. But, *christians*, having an unction from the *holy one*, knew all things. And, therefore, they were, with great propriety, advised not to believe every *spirit*; but to try the *spirits*, whether they were of GOD. For, though they were not to despise *prophecys*; yet they were to *prove* all things, before they held fast that which was good.

(2.) Under this head of *discerning spirits*, there seemeth to have been included “an ability of knowing the secret intentions of some of the *christians*; as well as of some, who disbelieved, or were ignorant of, the *christian religion*.”

By this mean, St. PETER detected the fraudulent designs of *Ananias* and *Sapphira*; and laid open their most secret contrivances. [Acts v. 1, &c.] St. PAUL, also, detected the wickedness of *Barjesus*, the *magian*, who secretly endeavored to turn away *Sergius Paulus*, the *Roman proconsul*, in the island *Cyprus*, from imbracing the *christian faith*: [Acts xiii. 6. &c.] And perceived that the lame man, at *Lystra*, had faith to be healed. [Acts xiv. 9.]

This gift was granted unto some of the *old testament prophets*: For instance, to *Abijah*^l, to *Elisha*^m, and to *Daniel*ⁿ.

(3.) Under this head of *discerning spirits*, may most properly be comprehended, “The knowing the temper and future behavior of some

^k Acts xi. 28. and xiii. 1, 2. and xxi. 10, 11.

^m 2 Kings vi. 8,—12.

^l 1 Kings xiv. 5, 6.

ⁿ Dan. ii. 28,—35.

An. Christi^{33.} “some of *the christians*; and, consequently, their fitness for such
 Tiber. 19. “and such particular offices, and stations, in *the christian church*.”
 Book I. We have several instances, in the new testament, of *prophets* haveing
 Chap. I. *this gift*; such *prophets*, I mean, as were not APOSTLES, but of an
 Sect. IV. inferior order. For instance: The holy spirit, by the mouth of the
 Acts ii. 4. prophets, at *Antioch*, in *Syria*, said, “Separate me *Barnabas* and
Saul, for the work, unto which I have called them.” [Acts xiii. 2.]
 And *Timothy*, who entered very young upon the work of an *evan-*
gelist, was pointed out, to St. PAUL, by *prophecie*. [1 Tim. iv. 14.]
 And, [Acts xx. 28.] it is said, that *the holy spirit* had made *the elders*
 of the church, at *Ephesus*, *bishops*: that is, such of them as then
 met St. PAUL, at *Miletus*. In like manner, *Clemens Romanus* inform-
 eth us, that “the APOSTLES appointed the first-fruits of their con-
 “versions to be *bishops*, and *deacons*; — haveing first tried [or prov-
 “ed] them by the spirit.”

Ignatius [*proem. ep. ad philadelph.*] speaketh of *the bishops*, *pres-*
byters, and *deacons*, at *Philadelphia*, as appointed, by the counsil of
 JESUS CHRIST; and confirmed by his holy spirit. [See, also, § 1.
 & *ep. ad Ephes.* § 1; 3; 6.] And *Clemens Alexandrinus* intimateth
 “that St. JOHN (after his return, from the island *Patmos*, to *Ephe-*
 “*sus*,) went about, among the churches, in the neighboring pro-
 “vinces; and (among other things) chose such men, into the number
 “of the clergy, as were pointed out, to him, by the spirit.”

I have said, that the APOSTLES were acquainted with the temper
 and future behavior of *some of the christians*. But they appear to
 have been unacquainted with the amazing hypocrisie and wicked-
 nesse of others; — even of some, who were placed in offices of trust
 and dignity, in the church.

OUR LORD himself (though he knew what was in man) chose
Judas, for an APOSTLE; notwithstanding he foresaw that he would
 prove a traitor. And, for the discovery of hypocrites, and the trial
 and confirmation of the sincere, he might conceal, from the APO-
 STLES, the malignity of mind, or future behavior, of some, whom
 they

* Ep. ad Cor. § 42. Δοκιμάσαυτε τῷ πνεύματι answering to πάντα δοκιμάζετε, 1 Theff.
 v. 21. and δοκιμάζετε τὰ πνεύματα, 1 John iv. 1. So that, though the new testament
 has not used the phrase, in this sense; yet one of the apostolic fathers has directed us
 to place this, of trying men, or proving them, who were to be intrusted with public
 offices in the church, under this head of trying, or discerning, spirits. And certainly,
Clemens Romanus knew the language of that age, and even of the APOSTLES them-
 selves.

P Clem. Alexandrin. edit. Potter. vol. 2. p. 959. Euseb. Hist. eccles. l. 3. c. 23.
 τῶν ὑπὸ τῷ πνεύματι σηματομένων.

they constituted *officers* in the christian church. If *Nicolas the deacon*, An. Christi [Acts vi. 5.] was the head of the wicked sect of the *Nicolaitans*,^{33.} [mentioned *Rev. ii. 6.*] as he is commonly thought to have been; Tiber. 19. he was a notorious instance of the case in hand. But, whether he was, or was not, the APOSTLES had evidently a limited knowledge Book I. Chap. I. Sect. IV. of the secret intentions, or future actions, of other men; — whether Acts ii. 4. christians, or unbelievers.

IV. In consequence of the forementioned *gifts*, or in close connection with them, the APOSTLES had the power of *binding* and *looseing*.

OUR LORD promised to St. PETER, [Matth. xvi. 19.] “I will “give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven. And *whatsoever thou shalt bind* on earth, shall be *bound* in heaven; and “*whatsoever thou shalt loose* on earth, shall be *loosed* in heaven.” OUR LORD, also, promised to all the APOSTLES jointly, thus, [Matth. xviii. 18.] “Verily, I say unto you, *Whatsoever ye shall “bind* on earth, shall be *bound* in heaven: and *whatsoever ye shall “loose* on earth, shall be *loosed* in heaven.” *Binding* and *looseing*, in both these places, are generally restrained, by christian interpreters, to matters of discipline and authority. But it is plane, from numberless passages in the *Misna*, as well as from the later *Rabbins*, when they are treating of ritual subjects, that *binding* signified, and was commonly understood by the *jews*, at that time, to be “a declaration that any thing was unlawful to be done.” And *looseing* signified, on the contrary, “a declaration that any thing might be lawfully done.” — The words, [*bind* and *loose*,] are, in both the places quoted from St. *Matthew*, used in a declaratory sense, of *things*, not of *persons*. It is *δ* and *ῥαα*, in both places, in the neuter gender. *Whatsoever thing, or things, ye shall bind, or loose*^a. Consequently; the same commission, which was given, at first, to St. PETER alone, was, afterwards, enlarged to all the APOSTLES. St. PETER had, first, confessed “that JESUS was *the son of GOD*, or *the promised messiah*.” To him, therefore, were first given the keys of the kingdom of heaven. GOD made choice of him, first, to *open* the door of faith, to the *jews*; and, afterwards, to the *gentiles*. And what St. PETER declared, as necessary to be believed and practised, by the disciples, here, (that is, what he *loosed*,) was ratified above. And what he declared unlawful to be believed, and practised, (that is, what he *bound*,) was actually forbidden of GOD himself. And this was true, also, of

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^a See *Lightfoot's* works, vol. 1. p. 238. and vol. 2. p. 205, &c. *Wotton's* *Misna*, vol. 1. p. 309, &c. and the authors referred to, by *Wolffius*, on Matth. xvi. 19.

An. Christi all the other APOSTLES. The people, consequently, were obliged to believe the doctrines, which the APOSTLES taught; and to obey the rules, which they prescribed. This is exactly agreeable to what *Maimonides* relates, concerning the *jews* ordaining a person to teach the people, when they said unto him, *Take thou power to bind and loose*, &c.^r

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In this sense of the phrase, the APOSTLES had the power of *binding* and *looseing*, after they had received *the gift of the spirit*; that is, They could declare, with certainty, what *laws* were obligatory upon *christians*. For instance; that all *christians* were to cultivate faith and love, piety, virtue, and universal righteousness. That such, as had formerly been *jews*, and still lived in *Judæa*, continued under obligations to observe *the moral*, and *political*, parts of *the jewish law*, even after their imbracing *christianity*; but that they, and all other *christians*, were to trust solely to the *gospel-method* of justification, and acceptance with GOD. That *the jewish christians*, out of *Judæa*, were bound to obey the laws of the countries, where they lived, as far as they could, with a good conscience; or patiently to suffer, when they were persecuted and oppressed. Though *christianity* was never designed to abridge men of any privileges, to which they, as men, or subjects, had a right before; nor to support *governors*, in a lawless and unlimited authority and tyranny.

The APOSTLES, (and particularly St. PAUL) declared that *the jewish christians* were freed from their former obligation to *the ceremonial law*; — provided they could get over their scruples, and be convinced of their being free from that obligation.

They declared that *the christians*, who had been *devout gentiles*, or *profelytes of the gate*, were obliged to observe only such parts of *the law of Moses*, as had been formerly obligatory upon them. And, (notwithstanding some bigoted *jewish christians* would have imposed the rest of *the jewish law* upon them) they declared them free from any farther obligation to *that law*. They declared that *the idolatrous gentiles* were obliged to forsake their *idolatry*; and to believe in *the true GOD*, and in his son, JESUS CHRIST, OUR LORD. But they let them know, that they were free from all obligations to *the law* of

* My only remaining difficulty, with respect to this interpretation of *binding* and *looseing*, is, that [*δέω, to bind*,] seems to signifie, [*to oblige*,] Rom. vii. 2. 1 Cor. vii. 27; 29. And [*λύω, to loose*,] seems to signifie, [*to break a law, or dissolve the obligation of it*,] Matth. v. 19. John v. 18. and vii. 23. and x. 35. 1 Cor. vii. 27. Eph. ii. 14. with which compare 1 John iii. 8.

of Moses. And the gospel was, to them, upon that account, the perfect law of liberty.

(2.) There is, also, in scripture, another sense of *binding* and *looseing*; that is, a *binding* men over to punishment, or *looseing* them from the obligations to punishment. And thus the words *binding* and *looseing* are used, Luke xiii. 12; 16. And this, I think, is the sense, in which we ought to understand the other phrases; of *retaining*, or *remitting*, the sins of men¹.

By *remitting of the sins of men*, I understand the freeing them from punishments, or rather the declaring them free from punishments; and, by *the retaining of sins*, the inflicting punishments upon them; or, rather, the declaring them liable to be punished.

But, perhaps, this extraordinary power, a great part of which was peculiar to the APOSTLES, will be better understood, if we farther consider it, according to the *blessings*, or *punishments*, which followed, upon their *remitting*, or *retaining*, of the sins of any persons. And, in this sense, again, the gift was two-fold; that is, as it related, either to things temporal, or eternal.

(1.) The APOSTLES remitted, or retained, the sins of men, as they bound them over to, or freed them from, temporal punishments. For instance: they struck bold, daring, and incorrigible offenders, with some bodily distempers, and sometimes with death itself. Or, in other words, they retained their sins, so as to denounce divine judgments against them, which were immediately (bound, or) inflicted upon them. But, when the persons became penitent, upon whom GOD had, according to their prædictions, inflicted diseases; they miraculously cured them. And so, likewise, they cured other persons, who had formerly labored under great disorders; by which, they (according to OUR SAVIOR's frequent sense of the phrase) remitted their sins, and cancelled the obligations to farther punishments.

This power, as it regarded the retaining of the sins of men, may be called the having the apostolic rod. For of this power, I think, St. PAUL was speaking, [1 Cor. iv. 21.] when he saith, to the disorderly christians, at Corinth, "Which do you desire? Shall I come unto you with a rod? Or in love, and in the spirit of meekness?"

He might, possibly, call it a rod, in allusion to the rods and axes of the civil magistrates. But, I rather think, he alluded to the famous

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¹ See Matth. ix. 2; 5, 6. Mark ii. 5; 9, &c. Luke v. 20; 23, 24, 25. John xx. 23. Dr. Lightfoot's works, vol. 2. p. 622.

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An. Christi^{33.} mous rod of *Moses*; by which GOD gave him *power* to call up
Tiber. 19. plagues, upon hardened *Pharaoh*, and idolatrous *Ægypt*.

Book I. THIS POWER is referred to, by St. PAUL, again, [2 Cor. x. 6.]
Chap. I. For he declareth, "He was fully able to revenge all disobedience;
Sect. IV. "after as many of *the Corinthians*, as would take the warning, were
Acts ii. 4. "reduced to obedience." And that he had such a *power*, is evident to me, from 2 Cor. xiii. 2, &c. For he, there, assureth them, "that, if he came again, and found any of them intractable, "he would not spare them; but would give them such remarkable "proofs of his haveing a supernatural, and extraordinary, *power*, "to punish the obstinate offenders; — that they should have reason "to repent their haveing questioned it so long; and that they had, "till then, been so audacious and incorrigible."

The *power* of *Moses* did, in many things, bear a resemblance to that of the APOSTLES; though *the apostolic power* and *illumination*, were much superior. [2 Cor. iii. 3, &c.] As, therefore, *Korah*, and his accomplices, were struck with sudden death, for their great wickedness, upon the denunciation of *Moses*, *the jewish law-giver*; when he was erecting GOD's *temporal kingdom*, over *Israel*: [Numb. xvi. 28,—35.] So it is most reasonable to refer, to this head, the remarkable death of *Ananias* and *Sapphira*; which was inflicted immediately from heaven, upon St. PETER's reprimanding them; and as the divine seal and attestation to his *apostolic* mission and doctrine: [Acts v. 1,—11.] and inflicted, when the APOSTLES were setting up *the spiritual kingdom* of GOD among men.

We do not, indeed, find that *this power* was carried, any more, to so great a length, as in the instance already mentioned. Nor could it, at any time, be more proper to use extraordinary severity, than in the begining of *this new dispensation*. For one, or two, such early examples might prevent the like daring wickedness, in multitudes. And, besides; their fault was, then, greatly aggravated, when there were so many bright and shining evidences of his being *the spirit* of *truth*, and *power*. In such circumstances, it was highly requisite, to convince the world, by some remarkable instances of terror, that the APOSTLES made no pretensions to *the spirit*, which *the spirit* would not inable them to support. And that (though their *miracles* were generally of the beneficent kind; yet) the *Being*, who sent them, had *power* to punish the disobedient; though he saw fit, in the planting and establishing so merciful and benevolent a religion, rarely to make use of that *destructive power*.

But,

But, though *Ananias* and *Sapphira* were alone struck dead, and *An. Christi* the power was no more carried to so great a height; yet *Bar-Jesus*, ^{33.} *Tiber. 19.* the *magian*, was struck blind, immediately, upon St. PAUL's prophetic denunciation of that sudden and divine judgment. [*Acts* xiii. 10, 11.] Which is the onely case, recorded, in the new testament, where this power was exercised upon any, who were not *professed christians*. Nay; St. PAUL, treating of the case of the incestuous *Corinthian*, speaks onely of judging such as were within the church; and of leaving such as were without, to the righteous judgment of GOD: [*1 Cor.* v. 12, 13.] though that text may, possibly, relate to a church-censure, which sometimes accompanied the exercise of the apostolic rod.

This power, of miraculously punishing offenders, was very sparingly exercised, even upon *professed christians*; though it was a most signal attestation to the apostolate. But, when *professed christians* became notoriously scandalous; and were so obstinate, as to be incorrigible, by milder methods; then it was exerted; though not, even in that case, "for destruction, but for edification." [*2 Cor.* x. 8. and xiii. 10.] that is, to strike an awe and terror upon the whole church; and upon as many others, as heard of it: To teach them not to offend, in a like, or equal, manner. [*Acts* v. 11; 13.] And, when a disease was inflicted, it was not onely as a warning to others; but, (if possible,) by such a temporal chastisement, to reduce the offender himself to repentance, in order to prevent his everlasting destruction. Or, (in the APOSTLE's language,) it was done "for the destruction (or mortification) of the flesh; that the spirit might be saved, in the day of the LORD." [*1 Cor.* v. 5.]

In some instances, the expression varies. And the criminal is said to have been delivered over to Satan, to chastise him, for the purposes already mentioned. [*1 Cor.* v. 4, 5. *1 Tim.* i. 20.]

Dr. Lightfoot, [vol. 2. of his works, p. 622, 623.] takes notice, that delivering a person to Satan, was a phrase, well-known to the antient jews; by which they meant more than excommunication; — even delivering men over, by miracle, to diseases, or death^t.

But, as it is said, [*1 Cor.* v. 4, 5.] to have been done, by the power of OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST; it deserveth to be inquired, Whether it meaneth any more, than "that such a particular distemper was to be inflicted, as the jews used, more especially, to ascribe to the power and malice of evil spirits?"

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^t See on *2 Thess.* iii. 15. *1 Tim.* i. 20. and the dissertation on *1 John* v. 16, 17.

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It doeth not, indeed, appear, that *the Corinthians*, who were punished, with some temporal judgments, for their unbecoming behavior, at the LORD's table, [1 Cor. xi. 30.] were so punished, upon any APOSTLE's denouncing such judgments upon them: — or the persons spoken of, *James* v. 14, 15. or those, about whom St. JOHN writeth. 1 *John* v. 16, 17. But, very probably, the persons, referred to, in all those places, had been guilty of things, so very unbecoming their *christian* character, as to draw down, upon themselves, remarkable, divine, judgments; some greater, and others lesse, according to the aggravations of their crimes. For, *the prayer of faith*, or the inspired prayer, of such as were indued with a power of working miracles, was to heal some of them. — But others, having *finned a sin unto death*, or such a sin as had drawn down, upon them, a sicknesse, which was to end in death; — he, who had the *gift* of healing, or *the power* of working *miracles*, was, in that case, not to pray for them, or to attempt to heal them: because GOD would not hear his prayer, nor enable him to work such a miracle. And, by such fruitlesse attempts, *christianity* would have suffered.

It appeareth, that other *christians*, besides the APOSTLES, had, in some cases, this *power* of *miraculously* cureing the diseased. Though others, again, pretended to use it, who had it not at all; or could not exert it, at that time. For none of them could succede; but when *the spirit*, by an impulse, directed them to make use of *that miraculous power*.

It is remarkable, that we never find any of the APOSTLES exerting, or makeing use of, this *power*, of punishing bold and incorrigible offenders; — except St. PETER, as the chief APOSTLE of the *circumcision*; and St. PAUL, as the chief APOSTLE of the *uncircumcision*. It is dubious, therefore, whether or no the rest of the APOSTLES had such a power. Though, it must be confessed, they might have it, and yet no instance be left upon record, of their exercising it.

However; I think it is very evident, that none of *the christians*, except the APOSTLES, could inflict such diseases. And, most probably, the APOSTLES had *the power* of miraculously releaseing the penitent, from such judgments, either more frequently, or in some superior manner and degree. Nor can we suppose, that *they* would ever attempt to exert such a *power*, but when, and in what cases, *the spirit* directed them; though some of *the inferior christians* seem to have been so rash and presumptuous.

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I should, indeed, have placed this, among *the miraculous powers*, if it had not appeared to me, to have been included, under the head of *remitting and retaining the sins of men*.

(2.) As some of *the blessings*, and *punishments*, which followed, upon the APOSTLE'S *remitting, or retaining, the sins of men*, were *temporal*, so others were *eternal*; that is, "They published *the gospel-terms* of justification; and declared, also, in what cases, and upon what accounts, persons would fall under condemnation." The substance of which, was, "That whoever believed in *the one true GOD*; and in his son, JESUS CHRIST, OUR LORD; repenting of, and forsakeing, his sins; and living, for the remaining part of his life, in piety and holiness, love and charity, temperance and righteousness; — he should, certainly, have his *sins remitted*, and inherit eternal life. But, then, he was to obey the laws of the country, where he lived; and to make conscience of all *social, relative, and domestic, duties*."

"Whosoever would lead a life contrary to these rules, his *sins* should certainly be *retained*; and he would be liable to fall under the righteous judgment of GOD."

This declaring *the terms of acceptance*, or in what circumstances men would be rejected of GOD, — doeth, indeed, most properly, belong to *the word of wisdom*; — though, as men were bound, thereby, to stand to the consequence of their behavior, it cannot be improper to mention it, under this head, also.

But farther; besides *this power*, which the APOSTLES had, of *remitting, or retaining, the sins* of mankind, in general; they had, also, (as hath been already hinted) *the gift of discerning the spirits*, or secret thoughts, of some particular persons. And, as they thoroughly understood *the gospel-terms of acceptance*, they could declare unto such, whether their sins would be *remitted*, or *retained*; — provided they persisted, in the same temper of mind, and course of life.

I would add, that I take this *apostolic power*, in all the branches of it, to have been merely *declarative*; that is, they were *illuminated*, or directed, by *the spirit of GOD*, what rules to *bind*, or *injoin*, upon men; and from what former obligations to *free* them.

When they miraculously *punished*, or *healed*, any person, all, that they had, was onely *an impulse of the spirit*; whereby they foretold what would befall such a person. *The miraculous power* was really OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST'S; and would never follow, upon their *declaration*; but when, and where, *the spirit* had directed them to make

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An. Christi make use of it. So that all, which they did, was the *foretelling*,
 33. what the LORD JESUS CHRIST was about to do, according to *the*
 Tiber. 19. *directions*, which they had received from *the spirit*. — So, likewise,
 Book I. when they published *the gospel-terms of acceptance* with GOD, they
 Chap. I. onely declared, that such, as came up to them, would be saved;
 Sect. IV. but that others, for want of complying with them, should perish.
 Acts ii. 4. And these general *terms* they, sometimes, by *the gift of discerning*
spirits, might, perhaps, apply to the cases of particular persons.
 Though I do not remember any instance of their so doing. Nor
 did they ever pretend to such a ridiculous thing, as an authority to
bind and loose, and to oblige GOD to stand to their determination;
 whether they did, or did not, teach, what CHRIST had command-
 ed them; — and whether they did, or did not, follow, *the direction*
 and *illumination*, which they had received from *the spirit*. — In one
 word; they pretended to no authority, but this; *namely*, that, when
 they spoke by *divine inspiration*, GOD would stand to his own word;
 and manifest himself to be a GOD of truth, as well as goodnesse,
 justice, and power. And, in such a case, indeed, “They, that de-
 spised the APOSTLES, despised him who sent them.” And, if
 this was all, that they, who had the *apostolic illumination*, and *miraculous*
powers, ever pretended to; — I will not say, how ridiculous their
 clames are, who, without *inspiration*, and *miraculous powers*, pre-
 tend, authoritatively, to *bind and loose*, *retain* or *remit*, the sins of
 men; and assert, that GOD is obliged to stand to their determina-
 tion; even supposing they should mistake; and *absolve* the impe-
 nitent, or *retain* the sins of the sincerely virtuous and penitent.

But enough of this. We, therefore, procede,

v. The APOSTLES had *the gift of prophetic*.

But, as this was common to them with many of *the inferior pro-*
phets, we will defer the enlarging upon it, till we come to consider
the gifts, which were bestowed, upon other *christians*, besides APO-
 STLES. Where we shall show, that it included, not onely “the
 “foretelling future events, but also an ability to carry on the seve-
 “ral parts of religious worship.”

vi. Another *gift of the spirit*, which was conferred upon the
 APOSTLES, and of which St. Luke hath often taken a particular no-
 tice was *the gift of tongues*; that is, “an ability to understand; and
 “readily, and, in an intelligible manner, to speak; a great variety of
 “languages.

We do not find that any of the old-testament *prophets* ever had
 this gift. And, though other *christians*, besides the APOSTLES, had
 this

this *gift*, in some degree; yet the APOSTLES appear to have had it, in a superior manner; and to have been able to speak more languages than *the inferior christians*. [1 Cor. xiv. 18.] This gift was given them, that they might preach *the gospel*, to men of different nations, without an interpreter; or, in the APOSTLE's language, *to be a sign to* (that is, to convince) *unbelievers*.

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For, had the APOSTLES been obliged to learn the language of every nation, before they had planted *christianity* among them, their lives would have been too short for the great undertaking; and they could not have made half so swift a progress, nor succeeded so well, as they did. They are said to have spoken fourteen, or fifteen, different languages, that very day, in which *the holy spirit* was poured down, upon them. — More languages than men can attain to speak, who spend a great part of their lives, in the acquiring of languages!

This amazed the great concourse of people, then at *Jerusalem*; — to hear illiterate fishermen of *Galilee* speaking, unto every one of them, in their own language, the wonderful works of GOD.

By *the word of wisdom*, and *the word of knowledge*, they were masters of their subject; and, by the extraordinary *fortitude*, with which they were indued, (of which I shall treat more largely hereafter) and by this *gift of tongues*, they could readily expresse what they so perfectly understood; and preach *christianity*, to persons of different nations, and different languages. Whereas; without this last *gift*, their inward *illumination* would have been very much like a talent hid in a napkin.

By the confusion of tongues, at *Babel*, mankind had been separated, and divided into different kingdoms and nations. But now, that curse, which GOD had formerly sent upon the nations, was turned into a blessing. For the multiplicity of *tongues*, bestowed upon the APOSTLES and *primitive christians*, was designed, not only to be a strong evidence of the truth of *christianity*; but also to unite mankind again, into one holy, *spiritual kingdom*; and to gather together the virtuous people, who were dispersed among the nations, into one compact body, one elect nation, one holy church, and people, of GOD.

At *Babel*, GOD had confounded the languages, and made the different dispersions unintelligible to one another; that they might, in several colonies, people the earth. But, now, the APOSTLES, and some of the *christians*, understood, and spoke, the several languages of the world, with as much ease, as the *Antediluvians* could under-

An. Christi stand, or speak to, one another; when the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech. And, thus, the dismal part of the curse, was, at a remarkable time, and upon a glorious occasion, removed. For, by this mean, the *jews*, in *gentile* countries, had the gospel preached among them: and, afterwards, the *gentiles*, also, who had been aliens from the church and people of GOD; and, for many ages, cut off, in a great measure, from that spiritual knowlege, which was contained in the scriptures of *the old testament*, were easily addressed to, and converted; when (in the fulness of time) GOD was gathering into one, again, all nations of men, who dwell upon the face of the earth; and uniteing them all into one church and body, under JESUS CHRIST, his onely son, who is justly, and emphatically styled, *the prince of peace*.

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This *gift of tongues* is taken more notice of, in the new testament, than any other *spiritual gift* whatever. Not that it was in itself equal to *the word of wisdom*, or to *the word of knowlege*; or to many other *spiritual gifts*, and *miraculous powers*. On the contrary; when St. PAUL is reckoning up *the spiritual gifts* and *miraculous powers*, according to their order and dignity, 1 Cor. xii. 8, 9, 10; 28, 29, 30. he placeth *the gift of tongues* the last but one; and prefers to it all the other *gifts* and *powers*, except onely *the interpretation of tongues*.

The reason, therefore, why it was so much taken notice of, seemeth to have been, because it was a showy gift; a *gift*, which ingaged men's attention, and struck them with great surprize and admiration. And what affected the world so much, and commanded men's attention, was, with great judgment, the most frequently taken notice of, and mentioned, with a mark of distinction, in an *history*, which was designed to represent things, in a popular style and manner.

VII. By *the effusion of the spirit*, the APOSTLES were indued with *the gift of the interpretation of tongues*; that is, "a power of understanding, and of readily and intelligibly turning, into the *vulgar tongue*, what another had spoken, in a dead, or foreign, language." For instance: Several of *the christians* had *the gift* of but one or two languages; and some of them could speak onely his *own native language*; though they had some other *spiritual gift*, or *miraculous power*. — Suppose, therefore, one of them to have spoken *hebrew*, in a church, where the body of *the christians* understood onely *greek*; and that the person, who spoke in that unknown tongue, was unacquainted with *the greek language*; or (at least) that he

he could not speak it, readily and intelligibly, (which, perhaps, was the case of *the false apostle*, in the church of *Corinth*) then there was a necessity, for some, who understood both the languages, to interpret, in *greek*, what he had spoken in *hebrew*^u. And so, at any time, when the auditory consisted of persons of different nations, it was highly proper that some should *interpret* what any of the persons, then present, did not understand; *that all might learn, and all might be edified*.

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We know, very well, that a man may hear, and understand, an oration, delivered in *latin*; and yet not be able to stand up, and repeat it, directly, in *english*. Nay; many a man, that has made, and publicly read, a *latin* oration, himself, could not, with any tolerable propriety and fluency, repeat it all, in *english*, directly, to the same audience. And, if such things may happen, now-a-days, when learning is so common; we need not wonder, that, in the apostolic age, *the gift of the interpretation of tongues* was a distinct thing from *the gift of tongues*.

These were all, or, at least, the principal, of *the spiritual gifts*, which were bestowed, upon the APOSTLES, by the effusion of *the holy spirit*.

CH A P. I. S E C T. V.

The miraculous powers, conferred upon the APOSTLES.

BESIDES *the spiritual gifts*, the APOSTLES had, also, *miraculous powers*; and those, either of a more excellent kind, or in a degree superior to that of the other *christians*.

I have intimated, above, that all, which the APOSTLES, or any other *christians*, had communicated unto them, in the working of a *miracle*, was onely an *impulse*, upon their minds, that, upon their speaking, or acting, so or so, a *miracle* would be worked; and that *the miraculous power* did not reside within them, like the *spiritual gifts*: but proceeded from OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, upon their invokeing him, or pronouncing the person healed, in his name:— And, that such an *impulse* of *the spirit*, upon their minds, might be

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very

^u See *F. Simon's Critical History of the New Testament*, Part III. p. 10. And *Lightfoot's Hor. Heb.* on 1 Cor. xiv. vol. 2. of his works, p. 783, &c.

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very properly reckoned among *the gifts of the spirit*. — But, as miracles onely prepared men for a careful and due attention, and conveyed no *knowledge*; as they disposed men to think, that they, who were possessed of *extraordinary powers*, might, very probably, have extraordinary *illumination*; as they were mere acts of power, I say, which onely made way for a more successful use of *the spiritual gifts*, there is a sufficient foundation for treating of *the spiritual gifts*, and *miraculous powers*, separately, and under distinct heads. And, as we have already considered the former, we now procede to treat of the latter.

I. “The APOSTLES had a *power* of strikeing bold and daring offenders, with some temporal punishments, and even sometimes with death itself.” But, of this, we have already treated at large. And, therefore, shall not here repete what hath been said.

II. “Upon the effusion of *the spirit*, the APOSTLES were indued with a greater degree of *fortitude*, than any other of the *christians* had; or than they themselves had before.”

Hereby, they had a *door of utterance*, or a proper resolution to speak freely; and to deliver even harsh and ungrateful truths; before the greatest personages, or most august assemblies.

OUR SAVIOR had ordered the twelve, when they should be brought before kings and rulers, not to be anxious what they should say; because *the spirit* should teach them, at that very time, what to say^a. And that this *power* was now given them, appeared planely, by the effects of it. For, though a maid-servant had terrified St. PETER, and made him meanly deny HIS LORD; and all the APOSTLES had, before this, kept close, in their upper room, with the doors bolted, for fear of the *jews*; yet now they were no longer afraid; but opened the doors, and appeared publicly, and preached *christianity*, to a vast concourse of *jews*, who came together, upon the report of what had happened. For it was, at the time of a very high, and solemn, festival. And there, in the midst of enemies; and (very probably) before some of the persons, who had procured the crucifixion of JESUS, they declared him to be the MESSIAH, with the greatest *opennesse*, and most undaunted *fortitude*. Nay; and even charged the *jews* with murdering so great a person. The *composure* and *fortitude* of the two APOSTLES, PETER and JOHN, surprized the *jewish sanhedrim*; and they could not account for it, 'till they had recollected that they had seen them in company with JESUS.

[Acts

^a Matth. x. 17,—20. Mark xiii. 11. Luke xii. 11, 12. and xxi. 12,—19.

[*Acts* iv. 8, &c.] And, though some of the company seem to have been a little daunted, upon the first attack of persecution; *that is*, when the *sanbedrim* had apprehended, and threatened, the two leading APOSTLES; yet we find, that, upon their return to their own company, and praying, the upper room, the usual place of their assembling, was again shaken; and they were favored with a second effusion of the spirit. And, then, they again spoke the word, or preached the christian doctrine, with boldness. [*Acts* iv. 31.]

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When all the APOSTLES were afterwards apprehended, and treated more roughly, by the *jewish sanbedrim*, PETER, with great reason and bravery, said: "We appeal to you, whether it can be right, in the sight of GOD, to regard you, more than GOD! For, GOD hath bid us preach christianity; and you, who are onely men, have forbid us. We, therefore, are resolved still to procede." And, when they had scourged them, and farther threatened them, they dismissed them. Upon which, it is said, they departed from the *sanbedrim*; not dejected, but even rejoicing, that they were accounted worthy to suffer such indignity, for the sake of CHRIST, or upon the account of propagateing the christian religion^b.

When the persecution raged against the christians, about the time of St. Stephen's martyrdom, the twelve APOSTLES, with great resolution, continued at *Jerusalem*, to support the distressed cause of christianity; and to consult how their affairs might be managed, to the best advantage, in such dangerous and discourageing circumstances.

When PAUL and BARNABAS began to preach to the idolatrous gentiles, it is observed that they waxed bold^c; and of St. PAUL, that "he preached, in his own hired house, at *Rome*, with all boldness^d." And he took notice of it himself, that this fortitude proceeded from an extraordinary assistance. [*1 Thess.* ii. 2.] The different conduct of PAUL, while he was onely a christian prophet, and after he became an APOSTLE, was very remarkable^e. That great APOSTLE of the gentiles would go, from a place, where he had been imprisoned, and scourged in a most severe and ignominious manner; and yet would begin to preach, in the next place that he came to, with as much resolution and chearfulness; as if he had, every where, met

^b *Acts* v. 29, &c.

^c *Acts* xiii. 46. with which compare chap. xxvi. 26.

^d *Acts* xxviii. 31.

^e Compare the following texts: *2 Cor.* xi. 32, 33.

Acts ix. 25: 29, 30. and xiv. 19. and xvi. 19, &c. *2 Cor.* iii. 12. and xi. 23, &c. *Eph.* vi. 20. *1 Thess.* ii. 2.

An. Christi met with the greatest encouragement, and kindest treatment imaginable.

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Every observing person knoweth, very well, how poverty depresseth men's spirits, and how abject it commonly rendereth them. With what hæitation and diffidence doeth the poor, friendlesse, man speak and act? And with what contempt and prejudice is he heard; especially when accused, and in the midst of enemies? But such calmnesse and resolution of mind appeared, in the words and actions of the poor, friendlesse, APOSTLES; even before the greatest personages, and most august assemblies; that it took away the contempt, and baffled their judges. Nay; they made even governors, and great men, to tremble, at their discourses.

The APOSTLES did, indeed, stand the most exposed to difficulties and dangers. And, therefore, with very great propriety, GOD indued them with *superior fortitude*.

Whether this their superior resolution and firmnesse of mind proceeded from their clear *knowledge of the whole scheme of the gospel*, their perfectly comprehending the scope and design of *the law and the prophets*, and their full assurance of the succeſſe and duration of *christianity*, notwithstanding all difficulties and obstructions; together with *the miracles*, which GOD inabled them to work, in testimony of their mission and doctrine; — whether their *fortitude*, I say, proceeded from their superior *spiritual gifts*, and *miraculous powers*, or was itself a distinct *miraculous power*, is not very material. Though I am apt to suspect that it was partly both. However; it is evident, that none of *the christians* had it, in a degree equal to the APOSTLES.

III. Though *the healing diseases*, and doing other *mighty works*, miraculously, was common to the APOSTLES, with many other of *the christians*; yet the APOSTLES had something different, and even superior, in this respect, also: *that is*, “They had a power, either to “do greater miracles, or to do common miracles in some superior “manner.”

(1.) The APOSTLES had an ability to do greater miracles. And, particularly, the raising persons from the dead, seemeth to have been peculiar to them. St. PETER and St. JOHN cured a man, who was forty years old, and had been lame from his birth. St. PETER raised *Dorcas* from the dead. And St. PAUL raised *Eutychus*. But we find no instance, in the new testament, of any of the *inferior christians* doing so.

(2.) The

(2.) The APOSTLES could do *common miracles* in some *superior manner*. The very shadow of St. PETER, as he passed along the streets, cured many. And, when handkerchiefs and aprons, which had touched St. PAUL's body, were carried to sick persons, at a distance, they were immediately freed from their diseases.

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These were *the special miracles*, which GOD worked, by the hands of the APOSTLES onely. Nay; we find no instances of any of the APOSTLES doing such extraordinary miracles, except St. PETER and St. PAUL.

IV. One of the most distinguishing *miraculous powers*, which was communicated unto the APOSTLES, was, "their ability to confer, "upon others, either some *spiritual gift*, or *miraculous power*, by "the laying on of their hands." And they seem to me to have done this, to *all the adult christians*, wherever they came. Though what particular *gifts*, or *powers*, they should impart, to any person, was not at their choice; but intirely according to the will and direction of *the spirit*; who knew best what was proper, both for particular persons, and for the common interest of *christianity*.

This *power*, of conferring *the holy spirit*, by the laying on of the hands of the APOSTLES, was, probably, what OUR LORD refered to, [*John* xiv. 12.] when he promised them, that they should not onely do such *miraculous works*, as he had then done; "but greater "works than these shall ye do (said he) because I go to my father." In confirmation of which, it may be observed, that he had not then poured out this plenteous effusion of *his spirit*.

In extraordinary cases, and where the choicest and the greatest plenty of *gifts* and *powers* were given, *the holy spirit* fell down, from heaven, immediately, and without the laying on of the hands of any man. And, perhaps, such an *effusion* was always accompanied with the appearance of a *glory*, like a *flame of fire*.

The spirit appeareth to me to have been poured out, seven times, in this manner. (1.) Upon OUR LORD, after his baptism; when he came up, from the river *Jordan*; and the voice from heaven proclaimed him *the well-beloved son of GOD*. (2.) Upon the hundred and twenty, on this memorable day of *pentecost*. (3.) Upon the hundred and twenty again, when they prayed for fresh assistance, and the house was shaken. And they are said to have *been all filled with the holy spirit*. [*Acts* iv. 31.] (4.) Upon *the eunuch*, whom *Philip* converted. [*Acts* viii. 39.] But, as that dependeth upon a different reading, we will defer saying any more about it, 'till we come to consider *the history* of his conversion. (5.) Upon *Saul*, immediately.

An. Christi^{33.} immediately after his baptism^f. (6.) Upon *the first-fruits of the devout gentiles*, to præpare the way for their being *baptized with water*, and received into *the christian church*. [Acts x. 44.] (7.) *The first-fruits of the idolatrous gentiles*, at *Antioch*, in *Pisidia*, are said to have been filled with the *holy spirit*.^g Which is the phrase made use of, when the *spirit* was poured out^h. And there seemeth to have been as much reason, for an effusion upon them, as upon the *first-fruits of the devout gentiles*. I, therefore, suppose that St. LUKE designed to intimate the manner, in which that *divine gift* was given, to those first-fruits of the idolatrous gentiles, by saying, that *they were filled with the holy spirit*.

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But, in most cases, *the spiritual gifts and miraculous powers* were conferred, by the laying on of the hands of the APOSTLES, and of them alone. Thus, when *Philip*, who was onely an *evangelist*, had converted the *samaritanes*, by preaching and working miracles; PETER and JOHN, two of the APOSTLES, went to them, as a thing of course, to confer upon them *the holy spirit*, by the laying on of their hands. And all *the churches*, where any of the APOSTLES had been, were blessed with that amazing gift. Nay; St. PAUL longed to go to *the churches*, where no APOSTLE had been, that he might impart unto them some *spiritual gift*ⁱ.

Chrysostom, speaking of the apostolic age, saith, "Miracles were then very common, and gifts of the spirit were bestowed upon all believers in general." [See *Dr. Lardner's credibility*, &c. part 2. vol. 10. p. 317; 382, &c.]

From what hath been said, I think it planely appeareth how well qualified the APOSTLES were, for such an extraordinary undertaking, as that of demolishing *the false religions*, which had been so long in possession, and planting knowlege and righteousness, instead of *idolatry*, ignorance, and wickedness. — An undertaking so uncommon, and so arduous, that they would never have ingaged in it, or even thought of it, if they had not been so qualified, and ordered to ingage in it! For mere men "were insufficient, of themselves, to have thought of any such thing, as of themselves, or in their own strength; but their sufficiency was of GOD; who made them

^f Some may, perhaps, inquire, "Whether *the spirit* was not poured out, again, upon *Saul*, when he was made an APOSTLE?" I think not; because he was then taken up into *paradise*, and *the third heavens*; and received the word from the mouth of OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST himself.

^g Acts xiii. 52.

^h Acts ii. 4. and iv. 31.

ⁱ Rom. i. 11, 12.

“ them able ministers of the new testament; not of *the letter*, but An. Christi
 “ of *the spirit*: that is, not of *the law of Moses*, but of *the gospel of* ^{33.}
 “ CHRIST. [2 Cor. iii. 5, 6.] Tiber. 19.

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C H A P. I. S E C T. VI.

*The spiritual gifts and miraculous powers, bestowed upon
 other christians, besides APOSTLES.*

I N the two præcedeing *sections*, it hath been shown, how well qualified the APOSTLES were, for their difficult and useful office. But, if it be considered, how much the world wanted a reformation, how much ignorance and idolatry, superstition and enthusiasm, vice and immorality, prevailed; and that there were onely twelve APOSTLES of *the circumcision*; and (at the most) onely two of *the gentiles*, or *uncircumcision*; it will be deemed highly reasonable, that they should have several *assistents*, to bear part of the burthen with them; though indued with *gifts* and *powers* of an inferior rank, or in an inferior degree.

It may not, therefore, be improper, in this place, to take a brief view of their furniture, also; that we may see that the cause was not unequal to the amazeing effect.

We may consider both *the persons*, and *the gifts* and *powers*.

The *persons*, who assisted the APOSTLES, to plant and water *christianity*, were either such as had the care of *the churches* in general, (as the APOSTLES themselves had, in the highest degree,) or such as were fixed in particular *churches*.

It is true, there were no persons of the last sort, 'till some *churches* were planted. But, as the APOSTLES had power to appoint such, and to impart *gifts* unto them, for that purpose; and, as the considering the *gifts* and *powers* together, will better illustrate the subject, by placing them in one view; it cannot be improper to anticipate a little, and treat of them in this place.

1. *The extraordinary persons*, who assisted the APOSTLES, in the care of *the churches*, in general, were either,

(1.) The highest order of *prophets*. Or, (2.) *evangelists*.

I cannot find that either of these sorts of persons had *the word of wisdom*. On the contrary; they appear to have learned all, that they

An. Christi knew, both of *the scheme of christianity*, in general; and of those
 33-
 Tiber. 19. *mysteries, or grand prophecies*, which related to the future state of *the*
christian church, — intirely from the APOSTLES.

Book I. But, *the superior prophets* seem to me to have had *the word of*
 Chap. I. *knowlege*; or a comprehensive view of the scope and design of *the*
 Sect. VI. *law and the prophets*. For so St. PAUL's ranking *the gifts of the*
 Acts ii. 4. *spirit*, and *the persons*, who had *the gifts*, leadeth us to suppose.
 [1 Cor. xii. 8, 9, 10. compared with verses 28, 29, 30.] And St.
 Stephen's speech, [Acts vii.] is (I think) a remarkable proof, and in-
 stance, to this purpose.

Some, indeed, have ascribed, to *the superior prophets*, the haveing
the revelation of the grand mysteries, which I have placed under *the*
word of wisdom; and which I take to have been peculiar to APO-
 STLES. And I must not omit to take notice of Eph. iii. 5. where
 it is asserted, that "*the mystery of CHRIST*, concerning the terms of
 "takeing *the gentiles* into the church, had been hid from former
 "ages; but was now reveled, to CHRIST's *holy APOSTLES and pro-*
 "*phets, by the spirit*." Here is, I must confesse, one instance of a
mystery's being said to be reveled to *the prophets*, whom I take to have
 been *the superior prophets*, in *the christian church*. But, then, I take
 this one *mystery*, in particular, to have been included under the ge-
 neral head of *the word of knowlege*. For, without understanding
the mystery of GOD's takeing in *the gentiles*, how could they possibly
 have had "a clear and comprehensive *knowlege* of the scope and
 "design of *the law and the prophets*? or a thorough understanding
 "of the confirmation, which the old testament gave to *christianity*?"
 For, the takeing *the gentiles* into the number of GOD's people, under
the messiah, was frequently praedicted, in the old testament. Nor is
 this the onely instance, where the same *spiritual gift* may be pro-
 perly ranked, either under a more general, or more particular,
 head.

(2.) The *evangelists* assisted the APOSTLES, in the care of the
churches in general. Some of *the superior prophets* were evidently
evangelists; particularly Philip, who was *full of the holy spirit*, and
 who did the work of *an evangelist*, when he planted a *christian*
church, in Samaria; and preached the gospel, in all the towns, from
Axotus to *Caesarea*. [Acts viii. 5, &c.] And, accordingly, he is ex-
 pressly called *an evangelist*. [Acts xxi. 8.] And a *superior prophet*
 was (I think) generally, if not always, *an evangelist*. This might
 be one reason, why St. PAUL hath not mentioned *evangelists*, 1 Cor.
 xii. 28, 29. But, as *evangelists* were not all of the highest order of
 pro-

prophets; St. PAUL hath properly made a distinction between them. An. Christi 33. Tiber. 19.
[Eph. iv. 11.]

None of the evangelists were APOSTLES of OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, but onely assistants to the APOSTLES. For they had neither the apostolic illumination, nor the apostolic powers. They, sometimes, went along with the APOSTLES, and assisted them, in planting, or watering, the churches. At other times, the APOSTLES left them behind them, or sent them to churches at a distance; to set in order the things which were irregular, to perfect what was deficient, to carry letters, or messages, and to bring back an account of the state of the churches. And, sometimes, the evangelists themselves planted churches: as appeareth, not onely from the case of Philip, which hath been already mentioned; but from the cases of the churches of Antioch in Syria, Rome, Colosse, Laodicea, Hierapolis, and other churches; which were planted, before any APOSTLE came thither.

II. The persons, who assisted the APOSTLES, in takeing the care of a particular church, were the elders, or first-converts; who appear to me to have had the care of particular churches, upon their being first planted: Or the bishops and deacons, who were chosen, out of the first-converts, to be the fixed officers of a church.

But, besides the elders, or bishops, and deacons, (who may be looked upon, as the præsidents, or leading men, of a church,) all the adult christians, in churches, planted by the APOSTLES, did greatly assist, in propagateing christianity; as they had (in general) some spiritual gifts, or miraculous powers. Among these, were the doctors, or teachers; the persons, also, who could heal diseases, or work other great miracles; helps; governments; such as had the gift of tongues; and others, who had the gift of the interpretation of tongues. But we shall more particularly describe these persons, from their peculiar gifts, or powers.

The spiritual gifts, which were conferred, upon other christians, besides the APOSTLE's, were,

I. The word of knowlege; which we have already defined, and shown to extend to superior prophets^a, as well as APOSTLES.

II. The

^a There were certainly superior, as well as inferior, prophetic gifts. Such, as had the superior gifts, I have all along called superior prophets; and such, as had the inferior gifts, inferior prophets. That there were some prophets greater than others, appears very plainly, from what our SAVIOR said, concerning John the baptist; [Matth. xi. 11.] namely, "That he was greater than all the former prophets; but inferior to the APOSTLES, and christian prophets."

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II. *The discerning of spirits*, This, in all the three branches of it, appears to have been granted to *inferior christians*. (1.) As it signified the trying, by what *spirit* any man spoke, who pretended to *the gift of prophesying*; — it is planelly supposed, that even the *inferior prophets*, among *the christians*, had it, by the directions, which the APOSTLES gave them, concerning the use of it^b. (2.) As it signified *the discovering the secret thoughts of men's hearts*, St. PAUL planelly supposeth it to have been common, among the *inferior christians*^c. (3) As *discerning of spirits* signifieth *a being able to point out, what persons would be fit for particular offices and stations in the churches*, — others had *this gift*, besides the APOSTLES. For it was, by the mouth of *the prophets*, at *Antioch in Syria*, that *the holy spirit* said, “Separate me BARNABAS and SAUL, for the work, unto “which I have called them^d.” And, very probably, *Timothy* was pointed out, to St. PAUL, by some of *the christian prophets*, as a person proper to be *an evangelist*^e. And, I am apt to think, that *the holy spirit* directed *Timothy*, which of *the elders*, at *Ephesus*, he should ordain to be *the bishops* of that church^f.

III. One of *the gifts of the spirit*, communicated to other *christians*, besides APOSTLES, was [*πίστις, faith*, or] “a stedfast belief, and “firm persuasion of performing what they were a going about^g.”

But, as *the spiritual gift of faith*, is, 1 Cor. xii. 9. placed the *third* in order, and answereth to *doctors* and *teachers*, ver. 28, 29. I take it there to signify “that satisfactory evidence, and full persuasion, in preaching *the christian doctrine*, which became *διδασκαλίας, doctors, or teachers*.” Such a stedfast belief, and full assurance, of

Surely! *Philip's daughters*, though *prophetesses*, had not equal gifts with their father, who was *an evangelist*. Nor were the persons, in the church of *Corinth*, who could onely pray by inspiration, in an unknown tongue, equal to such as could pray and discourse in an unknown tongue; and, after that, interpret what they had said. Nor were the last equal to *Timothy*, who could regulate all the affairs of that, and other churches; and had *prophetic gifts*, in proportion to his superior, and more extensive, work. This distinction between *the superior and inferior prophets*, St. PAUL hath observed. For, 1 Cor. xii. 28, 29. he reckons *prophets*, the next in order to APOSTLES; whereby he must mean *the superior prophets*; in as much as, ver. 10. of the same chapter, he has ranked (*inferior*) *prophecies*, the *sixth* in order, among *the miraculous gifts*. And, chap. xiv. he opposes *praying, singing, or discoursing*, in a known language, to speaking in an unknown tongue; and calls all the three first, by the general name of *prophesying*. [See ver. 3, 4, 5; 22, 23. compared with ver. 24.]

^b 1 Cor. xiv. 29. 1 Thess. v. 20, 21, 22. 1 John ii. 20; 27. and iv. 1.
^c 1 Cor. xiv. 24, 25. ^d Acts xiii. 1, 2. ^e 1 Tim. iv. 14. ^f Acts xx. 17; 28. 1 Tim. iii. 1, &c.

^g So the word *faith* signifies, Matth. xvii. 20. and xxi. 21. Mark xi. 22, 23. Luke xvi. 6. Acts vi. 8. 1 Cor. xiii. 2.

of their teaching, agreeably to what they had learned of the APO- An.Christi
STLES, as that they could teach with authority, and without hesita- 33.
tion. That did, very probably, procede from the *spirit's* strengthen- Tiber. 19.
ing their faculties; and, particularly, their memory. Book I.

IV. *Propbesying*, in the inferior degrees of it, was common to Chap. I.
other christians, as well as the APOSTLES. Sect. VI.
Acts ii. 4.

Though *the prophets* were not favored with immediate *revelations*, concerning the grand revolutions, which were to happen in the church, and in the world; yet they foretold some lesser events; which do not seem to have been *reveled*, but by their mouths, even to the APOSTLES themselves. Thus *Agabus* prophesied of an approaching famine, to the great relief of the *christian church*^h; and foretold that St. PAUL should be bound, at *Jerusalem*ⁱ.

The APOSTLES had, indeed, this *spiritual gift of prophecie*, in this lower branch of it^k. But, from what hath been said, it appeareth not to have been peculiar to APOSTLES.

These *prædictions* were not unlike the discoveries, which were made to *Deborah*^l; to *Eli*^m, to *the man of GOD*ⁿ, to *Samuel*^o, to *Nathan*^p, and to many other of the inferior old testament *prophets*.

(2.) As *propbesying* hath frequently, in *scripture*, another signification, besides foretelling future contingent events; it is proper to consider it, in that view; and to show that other christians had it, as well as the APOSTLES. St. PAUL hath defined it to be “a speaking unto men for edification, or exhortation, or comfort^q,” *that is*, a speaking, to such purposes, by *immediate inspiration*. For I have never found *propbesying* used, either in the old or new testament, for an uninspired person's explaning the *scriptures*; and, very rarely, if ever, for teaching without *inspiration*^r.

In

^h Acts xi. 28, &c. ⁱ Acts xxi. 10, 11. ^k Acts xx. 22, 23. and xxvii.
24. 2 Pet. i. 14. ^l Judges iv. 4,—7. ^m 1 Sam. i. 17. ⁿ 1 Sam. ii.
27; 31, &c. ^o 1 Sam. ix. 17. ^p 2 Sam. vii. 4, &c.

^q 1 Cor. xiv. 3.

^r 1 Chron. xxv. 1, 2. By *propbesying*, seems to be meant “singing, or playing upon harps, and other musical instruments, those psalms, or hymns, which had been composed, by such as were under a prophetic impulse.” For we can hardly suppose, that all the sons of those three principal men, among the Levites, *Asaph*, *Heman*, and *Jeduthun*, were *prophets*, or constantly inspired, whenever they played upon musical instruments; or sung, the praises of God, in the temple-service. But, as the prophets played upon musical instruments, sometimes, when they *propbesied*, or celebrated the praises of GOD; [1 Sam. x. 5; 10.] so these uninspired sons of the principal Levites are said to *propbesie*; especially as they sung prophetic compositions, or divinely inspired hymns. — All words are apt, in proceſſe of time, to deviate from their original signification. Thus, *Exod. xix. 6*. The whole nation of *Israel* is called a king-

An. Christi 33. Tiber. 19. In the sense, now given, *prophefying* sometimes included a variety of particulars under it. For instance,

(1.) *A doctrine*; that is, “some particular truth, delivered by *immediate inspiration*, which related either to *faith*, or *manners*; and which was peculiarly futed to the state of a particular *church*, or to some particular persons there¹. And perhaps it might be delivered, also, in some more clear, forcible, and convincing, manner.”

(2.) *A psalm*, [1 Cor. xiv. 26.] which is called *singing in*, or *by, the spirit*, [ver. 15.] By which, we may understand, that they either had both the matter and the manner immediately dictated to them; or sung, what had been composed in private, by prophetic impulse, in such a manner as *the spirit* then directed.

We have many instances of the former, in the old testament². And, perhaps, 1 Sam. x. 5, &c. may furnish us with an instance of the latter. However; it is evident, that *singing the praises of God*, was the principal part of what is there called *prophefying*; though some *prophetic discourses* and *actions* seem to have accompanied that *singing* the divine praises.

By this gift, some proper truths were delivered, in poetical expressions, and in a tuneable manner; whereby God was glorified, and *the christians* might be edified.

(3.) *Prophefying* did sometimes include the *praying in*, or *by, the spirit*³. Not onely the matter of their *prayers*, but even the order and expressions seem to have been, most commonly, dictated by *the spirit*.

There were, also, some other particulars, included under this general head of *prophefying*; such as *discerning of spirits*, *interpretation of tongues*, and the like. But, as we have already treated of some of these, under distinct heads, and shall so treat of the rest, we will say

a kingdom of priests; though the bulk of the people neither ruled as kings, nor sacrificed as priests: but were onely admitted to great honor and dignity, as a free, and highly-favored, people; and to approach near the sanctuary, or the royal and divine presence, in acts and offices of religious worship.

The sum of the matter, is, *prophefying* (like other words) might, sometimes, be used, in a quite different sense from it's original intention. But St. Paul, in treating of the prophetic gifts, would hardly use it, in any other, than it's strict and original signification.

¹ 1 Cor. xiv. 26. Acts xi. 26. Rom. xv. 14. Eph. v. 11. Col. iii. 16. 1 Thess. v. 14. and 2 Thess. iii. 15.

² Compare, with this, Exod. xv. 1, &c. 20, &c. Judges v. 1, &c. 1 Sam. ii. 1, &c. 1 Kings viii. 22, &c. Luke i. 46. &c. Acts iv. 24, &c.

³ Rom. viii. 26, 27. 1 Cor. xiv. 15. Jude, ver. 19, 20.

say no more of them, in this place; but procede to show how the persons, who had some of the last-mentioned gifts, and particularly the gift of discerning of spirits, and of propheying, came to be called [helps and governments,] as the APOSTLE hath styled them. [1 Cor. xii. 28.]

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(1.) It will be plane to any, who will take the pains to compare ver. 10. with ver. 28. that propheying answereth to helps, according to the order of rangeing the gifts, and the persons who had the gifts. And it is as evident, that the persons, who could foretell future events, and deliver discourses, sing psalms, and hymns, and pray, by inspiration, were great HELPS to the christians; especially in the carrying on of their religious worship. For, in the infancy of the church, the books of the new testament were not written: nor any prayers, psalms, and discourses, futed to the worship of a christian church, drawn up, either for common, or private, use. Without such HELPS, therefore, in such circumstances, what could the christians have done, in most of the churches, towards the regularly carrying on of their religious worship. [See the dissertation, annexed to 2 Timothy, second edition, p. 616, &c.]

(2.) Governments. — This, by compareing ver. 10, and 28. will easily appear to answer to discerning of spirits. For κυβερνησις doeth, in the literal acceptation, signifie the steering of a ship; and, by a beautiful figure, the governing, or directing, in any affair. If, therefore, it be remembered how the discerning of spirits was explained, it will be easie to make these two agree*. For they, who could discern spirits, could inform the churches, whether such, as pretended to prophecie, spoke by inspiration, or no. Whether a stranger came into the christian church, as a spy, out of mere curiosity, or with a desire to be instructed: And who were proper persons, for particular offices, and stations, in the church. And whoever could discern men's hearts, so as to do any, or all, of these three things, were fit to sit at the helm, and steer, or direct the church how to behave.

v. Several of the christians, besides the APOSTLES, had the gift of tongues. What that gift was, hath been already explained. And that other christians, besides the APOSTLES, had it, is evident^y. But it may not be amisse to observe, that the APOSTLES could speak more languages than the other christians^z: And that they, who spoke

* This is represented, more at large, in the dissertation, annexed to 2 Timothy, p. 612, &c. second edition.

^y Acts x. 46. and xix. 6. 1 Cor. xii, xiii, and xiv.

^z Acts ii. 6, &c. 1 Cor. xiv. 18.

An. Christi spoke, in *an unknown language*, did, commonly, at the same time, *prophesie*; or deliver, by *inspiration*, some useful truths, as well as speak in *an unknown tongue*.

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VI. Some of the *inferior christians* had, likewise, *the gift of the interpretation of tongues*^a.

But, besides the *spiritual gifts*, many of the *inferior christians* had, also, *miraculous powers*. They had *fortitude*, to propagate *christianity*; and to suffer for it, rather than betray it. This *fortitude* is particularly ascribed to *Apollos*^b, who was no APOSTLE: though none of the *christians* seem to have had it, in a degree equal to that of the APOSTLES. The *inferior christians* could, also, work some *miracles*; and, particularly, could *heal diseases*^c. But we have no instances, in the new testament, of their cureing persons, at a distance; or raising the dead; or conferring the *holy spirit*, upon any, by *the laying on of their hands*.

However; by preaching the scheme of *christianity*, which they had learned of the APOSTLES; by communicateing the particular *revelations*, which were made to them; and by working many *miracles*, though of an inferior kind; they were greatly *helpful* to the APOSTLES; especially, as their numbers were so very great, and they were dispersed into so many, and such distant, countries.

When the APOSTLES, and their *assistants*, were thus supernaturally and divinely qualified: they might, upon much better grounds, promise themselves success, than any *politician* can, from the wisest and best concerted *scheme*, that was ever laid.

Haveing, therefore, taken a summary view of them, in their several ranks and orders; and inquired into their instructions and qualifications; — we now procede to,

^a 1 Cor. xiv. 5; 13; 26, 27.

9, 10; 28, 29, 30. James v. 14, 15.

^b Acts xviii. 24; 26.

1 John v. 16.

^c 1 Cor. xii.

C H A P. II.

Wherein the APOSTLES are considered, as setting about the mighty and glorious undertakeing. Acts ii. 5, — to the end of that chapter.

S E C T. I.

The first period of the conversion of the JEWS, at Jerufalem. Upon the news of the effusion of the spirit, great multitudes came together. St. PETER answereth their inquiries. Asserteth JESUS, who was lately murthered there, to be the messiah. The APOSTLES worked miracles; converted three thousand, that day; who were baptized; and afterwards received the holy spirit.

WHEN the hundred and twenty found these effects, from that amazeing effusion of the holy spirit; when they found their minds, so suddenly, and so very much, enlarged; and all, at once, filled with knowlege; when the APOSTLES, in particular, found, that, by this sudden illumination, they understood the whole scheme of the christian doctrine, fully and clearly; that they could deliver it, in a variety of languages, readily and intelligibly; that they could support it, by the prophecies of the old testament; that they could work miracles; and communicate spiritual gifts and miraculous powers, unto others, by the laying on of their hands; and that they had such fortitude, as not to fear the face of men: — When they found themselves, all at once, I say, under such an uncommon, and immediate, divine influence, their upper room was shut up no longer; but they throw open the doors, with an undaunted heart. And, being big with the heavenly inspiration, and full of matter, the spirit within them constrained them; their belly was like wine, which hath no vent; but is ready to burst the bottles. They, therefore, sought to speak, that they might be refreshed; and to open their lips, that they might give a vent to the fulnesse of their hearts ^a.

And an happy opportunity they had, for communicateing their new light. For the city, Jerufalem, was, at that time, crouded with strangers and foreigners, who were jews, or proselytes of righteousness;

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L

ness;

An. Christi *nessé*; that is, *jews* by religion, though not by birth. Those foreigners were come, from many distant countries; some to worship, in the courts of *the temple*, at that great feast of *pentecost*; and others, to fix at *Jerusalem*; possibly, from an expectation that the *messiah* would shortly appear.

Book I. Chap. II. Sect. I. Acts ii. 5, &c. *Suetonius* and *Tacitus*^b, two heathen authors, have intimated, “that the rumor of a great king’s arising out of *Judæa*, about that time, had spread, far into other countries; and that it had taken its rise from the antient books of the *priests*,” that is, most probably, from the *prophecies* of the old testament. But *the jews*, in a more particular manner, were daily looking when the kingdom of GOD would appear^c. And their expectations were so far just. For the time of reckoning, from *Daniel’s famous prophecy* of the seventy weeks, [*Dan. ix. 25, &c.*] was now quite run out.

At the time of that high festival of *pentecost*, and upon that signal day of the year, in which *the law* is thought to have been given, from *mount Sinai*; — early in the morning, and before the concourse of the people was gathered together, at the temple, — the APOSTLES opened the doors, in order to admit all that would come and hear them. And, to as many as did come, they addressed themselves, in their own languages; declaring the resurrection of *JESUS*, and that he was the promised, and long-expected, *messiah*. — Perhaps, the APOSTLES had not, before this, taught any thing, but what they had heard, from the mouth of *JESUS*. But, now, they spoke, from an inward fund of *knowledge*, or as *the spirit gave them utterance*. And it doeth not appear that any, but the twelve, preached to that large audience. For, upon the APOSTLES, *CHRIST* had determined to found his church. And the rest of the hundred and twenty had not yet so fully learned the scheme of *the christian doctrine*, from them, as to be able to teach it clearly, and without hesitation.

By their begining, in this place, was a most noted *prophecy* fulfilled; which is twice mentioned in the old testament^d, and that almost in the same words: “Out of *Sion* shall go forth *the law*;” “(that is, of *the messiah’s kingdom*) and the word of the LORD” “from *Jerusalem*.” For, (as hath been already observed) the house, in

^b Sueton. in Vespas. c. 4. Tacit. Hist. l. 5. c. 13.

^c Luke ii. 26; 38. and iii. 15. and xix. 11. John i. 19, &c. with which compare Joseph. de Bell. Jud. l. 6. c. 5. § ult. Euseb. Hist. Eccles. l. 3. c. 8. sub fin.

^d Isai. ii. 3. Micah. iv. 2.

in which was their upper room, stood upon *mount Sion*^e. “There
 “was the standard of CHRIST first erected, as an ensign to the na-
 “tions. And from thence went forth the rod of his strength, by
 “which he ruled, in the midst of his enemies; and, (from that
 “time, or) in that day of his power, the willing nations submitted
 “to him chearfully; and numerous, like drops of morning dew^f.”

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The news of this wonderful effusion of the *spirit* soon took air. The crucifixion of JESUS of Nazareth, in that very city, for his pretending to be the *messiah*; and the rumor of his *miracles* and *resurrection*, were yet fresh in the minds, and frequently in the mouths, of every body. And now, that his followers took courage, and so openly and boldly declared him to be risen again, and to be the *messiah*, — amazed them all; especially, when persons, whom their old acquaintance could testify to have been, most of them, poor and illiterate fishermen of *Galilee*, spoke, in the audience of the foreigners, their several languages, distinctly and intelligibly, and upon such great and sublime subjects. For, the testimony of their old acquaintance, and of the foreigners, compared together, made the miracle clear and unquestionable. And it caused still greater crouds to flock round them, to see, and hear, and satisfy themselves. Some seemed well-disposed, and honestly confessed the surprize.

“Are not all these men, who speak thus, *illiterate Galileans*?
 “How comes it to passe, then, that they speak so many languages^g,
 “so readily and intelligibly? Here are now present, *Parthians*,
 “*Medes*; and *Persians*, of the province of *Elymais*^h; natives of
 “*Mesopotamia*, (or of the country, which lieth between the *Tigris* and
 “*Euphrates*;) and of *Judæa*, *Cappadocia*, *Pontus*, and the *proconsu-*
 L 2 “lar

Ver. 6. ^e See the note on chap. i. 13.] Upon *mount Moriah* the temple stood, and the city of *David* upon *mount Sion*. Between these two mountains, there was a deep valley; over which there was built a bridge, for the more easie communication. It is true, these two mountains are, sometimes, both included under the general name of *Sion*; and the temple is intimated to have been built upon *Sion*. But, as the APOSTLES are not here said to have gone out to the temple, when they began to preach; as they are expressly said to have done, chap. iii. — as the two mountains were generally distinguished; and the tradition, mentioned by *Epiphanius*, is not improbable; — I choose rather to consider them as here distinguished; namely, that *mount Sion*, strictly speaking, is here to be understood; and not, as in it's more general and lax signification, it included *mount Moriah* also.

^f Psal. cx. 2, &c.

Ver. 8. ^g That *διὰ* signifies not onely what we call a different *dialect*, or a different way of speaking the same language; but, also, a different tongue, or an intirely distinct language: — See the passages taken, by *Raphaelius*, out of *Polybius* and *Plutarch*.

Ver. 9. ^h So called from *Elam*, the son of *Shem*, Gen. x. 22. *Isai.* xxi. 2. and xxii. 6. *Jer.* xxv. 25. and xlix. 35. *Ezek.* xxxii. 24. *Dan.* viii. 2.

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“ *lar Asia, Phrygia, and Pamphylia, Ægypt, and of the parts of*
 “ *Lybia about Cyrene, inhabitants of the city of Rome, who are*
 “ *now sojourning at Jerusalem; — some of us jews by birth, and*
 “ *others borne of gentile parents, but circumcised, and jews by*
 “ *religion; Cretes and Arabs: And yet we, none of us, need an*
 “ *interpreter, to understand these Galileans. But we, each of us,*
 “ *hear our own languages spoken, perfectly, and distinctly¹. And*
 “ *their discourse is not about mean and trifling things; but they*
 “ *treat of subjects of the greatest dignity, and of the highest im-*
 “ *portance; namely, the wonderful works of GOD; or the several*
 “ *dispensations of GOD to mankind, in the successive ages of the*
 “ *world; and particularly, concerning the resurrection of JESUS of*
 “ *Nazareth, and of the messiah's kingdom. What can this mean?*
 “ *Illiterate Galileans could never have arrived at such skill, in sub-*
 “ *jects so difficult and sublime; and at such an amazing perfection*
 “ *in so many languages; by common means, and in the natural*
 “ *and ordinary way. Men attain not to such a treasure of know-*
 “ *lege, and to such a readinesse in the speaking of so many tongues,*
 “ *by the help of the best education, the greatest genius, and a life*
 “ *spent in a long, close, and laborious, study!*”

Thus they expressed their doubts one to another.

Others, who were more gay and thoughtlesse, would have made them their sport and diversion. Most probably, they were *the jews*, who lived at *Jerusalem*, or in *Judæa*, and who (because they understood onely their own native language) knew not that the APOSTLES spoke any language at all; but, perhaps, took their speech for a mere *confused gibberish*. And, haveing, likewise, a most sovereign contempt for JESUS, and his followers; they scoffingly answered the dubious, and the surprized: “ Would you know what is
 “ the matter with these *Galileans*; and why they make such a
 “ noise, and seem so full of zeale? We know them well enough;
 “ and are sure, that they can speak in no language but their own
 “ *mother tongue*. What you take for so many languages, we look
 “ upon,

Ver. 11. ¹ “ *The jews said unto Peter, “Thou art a Galilean, and thy speech betrayeth thee.” “If the APOSTLES, on this day of pentecost, had expressed themselves improperly, or with a bad accent; as most people do, when they speak a living language, which is not natural to them, the hearers, who, at that time, were not converted to christianity, would have suspected some fraud, would have taken notice of such faults, and censured them. Which, since they did not, it is to be supposed that they had nothing of that kind to object.” [See Mr. Jortin's remarks on ecclesiastical history, vol. 1. p. 20.]*

“ upon to be nothing but an unintelligible *jargon*, and sounds with-
 “ out any meaning: And this pretended *inspiration* of theirs pro-
 “ ceded onely from the fumes of sweet wine^k, In plane terms,
 “ they are intoxicated this morning. And, thereupon, they phanfy
 “ themselves under *the divine inspiration*, and that they have (we do
 “ not know what) *knowledge*; and are able to speak such a *variety*
 “ of languages, as the most learned men, and the greatest geniuses,
 “ do not pretend to.”

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*So they, among themselves, in pleasant vein,
 Stood scoffing. —*

When the APOSTLES, by their joint labors, had raised the curio-
 sity and attention of the multitude, they gathered together in a bo-
 dy, and the croud stood round about them, with silence and admi-
 ration. Upon which, St. PETER, (to whom were committed *the*
keys of the kingdom of heaven; who was *the rock*, upon which *the*
church was to be founded; and who is generally mentioned, as the
 first and leading man, among the APOSTLES of *the circumcision*: —
 St. PETER, I say,) standing up, with the eleven APOSTLES, as their
præfident, or *speaker*, first answered the scoffers; and then gave an
 account of their *illumination*; to satisfy the dubious, and convert
 the well-disposed. Exalting his voice, with a tone of *authority* and
fortitude, he thus addressed himself, to that great multitude; who
 had, many of them, so lately, consented to, or procured, the death
 of his great LORD and MASTER, “ O ye jews of *Judæa*; and ye,
 “ who now sojourn at *Jerusalem*, give audience, and a fixed atten-
 “ tion, to the important truths, which I am now about to deliver.
 “ Some among you have supposed, and scoffingly asserted, that such
 “ of us, as have spoken *foreign languages*, are drunk with sweet
 “ wine; but let me assure you, that such an insinuation is highly
 “ injurious. For, it is yet onely about nine a-clock in the morn-
 “ ing. Whereas; *they, that are drunk, are drunk in the night*^l.
 And,

Ver. 13. ^k Though there was no *must*, or *new wine*, at *pentecost*; yet, if they pre-
 served the wine cool, it kept *sweet* a long time, and tasted like *must*: Which, is, in-
 deed, the proper signification of γλεῦκος. So Plutarch. *Quæst. Natur.* p. 928. Γλεῦ-
 κος ἐν ὑπὸ ψύκης περιέχεται τὸ ἀγρεῖον, γλυκὺ διαμένει πολὺν χρόνον. *Must, if a vessel be*
kept in a cool place, will continue SWEET for a long time. [Vid. Beza, Elfsner. & Wet-
 sten. in loc.]

Ver. 15. ^l Such of the jews, as imitated the *heathens*, and got drunk at their festi-
 vals, did not use to take such criminal liberties, 'till after the sacrifices were offered,
 and the oblations made. And the morning-sacrifices were not now offered; to which,
 as some think, St. Peter might allude. [See Spencer. *de legibus hebræorum*, edit. Chap-
 pelow. p. 716.]

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“ And, upon our *sabbaths*, and *solemn festivals*, we are not wont
 “ to eat, or drink, any thing, so early in the day; as you very well
 “ know: which custom we have, this morning, very carefully ob-
 “ served. But, such a groundlesse reflection scarce deserveth any
 “ answer. For, the foreigners can satisfie you, that their languages
 “ were spoken, planely and intelligibly. And the discourses, which
 “ they heard, were so sublime and coherent, as that men must be
 “ sober, to talk so well. However; to take away all ground of ca-
 “ vil; and to give you all reasonable satisfaction; I will inform you,
 “ what *illumination* this is, and from whom it procedeth. — You
 “ have, indeed, among you, a *maxim*, “ that *the divine majesty* dwell-
 “ eth not, upon persons, out of *Palestine*, nor upon any poor persons,
 “ as men-servants, or maid-servants.” But, in *Joel*, is found a re-
 “ markable *prophecie*, to this effect: “ And it shall come to passe, in
 “ the *last days*, (of *Jerusalem*, and *the jewish state* ^m, when *the messiah's*
 “ *kingdom* shall begin to be erected) that I will pour out of my *spirit*,
 “ faith GOD, upon all flesh, (*that is*, upon persons of all nations,
 “ and of all conditions of life;) your sons and your daughters shall
 “ prophesie; your young men shall see visions; and your old men
 “ shall have divine inspiration, communicated to them, in dreams.
 “ And, upon my men-servants, and my maid-servants, I will pour
 “ out of my *spirit*, in those days; and they shall prophesie. But,
 “ for the terror and condemnation of such, as will not submit, up-
 “ on sufficient evidence, I will show prodigies ⁿ, in the air above,
 “ and

Ver. 17. ^m In *Joel* it is [אחרי כן, akaree cheen, *After these things*, Joel ii. 28, &c.] Which expression, the *jews* understood, as St. PETER hath expressed it. And R. Kimchi, in particular, hath this note, upon that text, in *Joel*: *And it shall come to passe, after these things*, is the same (saith he) with, [*And it shall come to passe, in the last days.*] See Dr. Lightfoot's works, vol. II. p. 645.

Ver. 19. ⁿ See this prophesied of, *Luke* xxi. 24, 25.

Josephus [*de bell. Jud.* l. 6. c. 5. § 3.] saith, that (before the destruction of *Jerusalem*) a star hung over the city, like a sword; and a comet continued visible for a whole year, darting it's fires, and illuminateing the skies. — That, (before the war broke out) when the people were assembled, at the *passover*, on the eighth day of the month *Xanthicus*, at the ninth hour of the night, such a radiant light shone, round about the altar and the temple, for the space of half an hour, that the night was as bright as day. — That, at the same feast, when the *priest* was leading a cow to the altar, for a sacrifice, she brought forth a lamb, in the middle of the court of the temple. That one of the gates of the temple, which was made of brasse, and of an huge weight, and which twenty men could scarce shut, did, nevertheless, appear to open, of it's own accord, about the sixth hour of the night; when it was barred and bolted, in the strongest and firmest manner. And, when the keepers of the temple had notice of it, they could scarce shut it again. And farther: — A few days after the *passover*, such a prodigy (he saith) happened, as would have exceded belief, had it

“ and portentous signs, upon the earth below ; *namely*, a vast effu-
 “ sion of blood, from innumerable slaughters of men^o; such a
 “ mighty fire, to burn villages, towns, and cities, as will, with
 “ the pillars of smoak, darken the air, greatly obscure the sun, and
 “ make the moon to appear like blood^p; — before that remarkable
 “ day

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it not been testified, by them, who had actually seen it; and the miseries, which followed, been answerable to the signs, or prognostications. For, before the sun-set, there appeared, high in the air, all over the country, chariots, and armed troops, moving swiftly in the clouds, and throwing up trenches round cities.

At the feast, which is called *pentecost*, when the *priests* went, by night, into the inner temple, to officiate, according to custom, they said that they heard first a motion, and a confused noise; but afterwards the voice, as of a great multitude, saying aloud, [*Let us go hence.*]

And the story of *Jesus*, the son of *Andrus*, is very remarkable; who, for seven years together, cried out, [*Woe to Jerusalem, and the temple, &c.*] and could be deterred from it, by no scourging, nor cruel treatment. *Josephus* speaks, also, elsewhere, of such dreadful tempests, thunders, lightnings, and earthquakes, that the whole frame of nature seemed to be disordered: — So that any one might guess, that these were signs of no small calamities. [*De Bell. Jud. l. 4. c. 4. § 5.*]

From all which, and more to the same purpose, *Josephus* very justly observeth, that the *jews* had fair warning from GOD; and perished, intirely by their own folly and wickedness.

As to these, and like prodigies, which preceded the destruction of *Jerusalem*, see *Tacit. Hist. l. 5. c. 13.* And how remarkably, and exactly, the whole prophetic was accomplished, see Mr. *Ghandler's dissertation, annexed to his commentary on Joel.*

^o Matth. xxiv. 6, 7. — [*Vid. de Bell. Jud. l. 4. c. 4. § 5.*] where *Josephus* saith, “ that the state of the universe seemed disordered, at the slaughters of men.” And, [c. 5. § 1.] “ that eight thousand and five hundred men were found slain, in *Jerusalem*, and, more especially, about the temple.” And, § 2. “ that, afterwards, the *idumæans* killed all they met.” And, [§ 3.] “ that twelve thousand of the best quality perished, by the cruelty of the *Zelotes* and the *Idumæans*.” And [c. 6. § 3.] “ that the massacre was so great, that heaps of dead bodies lay piled up, in the high ways.” And, [c. 7. § 4.] “ At *Bethennabris*, numbers of *jews* were destroyed.” And, [§ 5.] “ The *jews* were forced to engage in a battle; in which fifteen thousand were slain, and an infinite number forced to leap into the river *Jordan*.” [§ 6.] “ All the country was full of slaughters; *Jordan* could not run, but was choaked up with dead bodies; and the lake *Asphaltis* filled with carcases..”

[*Antiq. l. 18. c. 9. § 1.*] The *jews* at *Babylon* were slain, in such numbers, as never any history before had mentioned. And, besides several former slaughters, there were slain, in *Seleucia*, above fifty thousand of them, at once. [*ib. § 9.*]

[*Lib. 20. cap. 6. § 1.*] *Eleazar*, a robber, plundered and burned some of the *samaritan* villages. And *Cumanus* killed many of the *jews*.

It were endless to quote all, that *Josephus* hath related, in his *seven books of the wars of the jews*, concerning the numberless slaughters of the *jews*, which happened, all over *Judæa*, (as well as other places) by the *jewish* factions; and, by the *Romans*, before the destruction of the city and temple. The *english* reader may find the account, in the translations of *Josephus*. And, therefore, we shall refer to no more places.

Ver. 20. ^p Some take the *sun's* being darkened, and the *moon's* being turned into blood, to denote the destruction of the government, both in church and state. Others take them,

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“ day of the LORD shall come, in which will happen the final destruction of the *jewish polity*, both in *church* and *state*; and even of the *nation* itself, together with *the city* and *temple*. But, amidst all these dreadful appearances, and great disasters^a, whosoever shall heartily and sincerely call upon the name of the LORD, and imbrace the religion of his anointed son, *the messiah*, he shall be saved, from all these impending evils, however dangerous, or formidable.” This day, is this *prophecie* begun to be remarkably fulfilled. And, as you may very naturally inquire, who is *the messiah*, that is to save you? And what is *the religion*, which you are to imbrace? I answer, by declareing (what may, perhaps, surprize you, *jews*; and especially such of you, as have been concerned in his death: but it is what claimeth your particular attention; and I am obliged to declare it; *namely*, that) JESUS of *Nazareth* was a man, whom GOD made conspicuous among you^r, and fully manifested to be some great and extraordinary person; by the miracles, wonders, and signs^t, which GOD, by him^t, worked among you, openly, and evidently, as you yourselves know very well.”

“ You do, indeed, expect a *triumphant messiah*; and despise one, that comes first, in an humble, afflicted, condition. But *the prophets* have prophesied, that *the messiah* should first be afflicted, and suffer death; and then be raised, and exalted to universal dominion. And, accordingly, this great and glorious person was delivered into your hands; (not without the divine foreknowledge; nay, even according to the scheme pitched upon, for the redemption of mankind. — For GOD had determined to let him fall into your hands^u, and to leave you to yourselves, to follow the dictates of your own wicked hearts; and he knew, before hand, that,

them, in general, to denote the approach of some very great calamities; as they seem to do, *Eccles. xii. 2. Isai. xiii. 9, 10. and xxxiv. 4, &c. and li. 6. Ezek. xxxii. 7, 8. Joel ii. 1, 2, 3; 10; 30, 31. Amos viii. 9. Rev. vi. 12. and viii. 12. and ix. 2.* I have here taken them as literally intended; because both our *savior's prophecie*, concerning the destruction of *Jerusalem*, this *prophecie of Joel*, and the accomplishment, according to *Josephus*, seem all to be literal; and but a very few figurative expressions seem to me to be intermixed.

^a Compare with this *Ezek. ix. 4, 5, 6.*

Ver. 22. ^r *Matth. xi. 4, 5. Luke xi. 14,—17. John iii. 2. and v. 36. and x. 25; 38. and xiv. 11. and xv. 24. Acts x. 38.*

^t As to the difference between *miracles*, *signs*, and *wonders*, see on 2 *Theff. ii. 9.*

^t *John v. 19,—27; 43. and xiv. 9, 10, 11.*

Ver. 23. ^u *Matth. xvii. 22, 23. and xxvi. 24; 52, 53, 54. Luke xxii. 22; 53. John x. 17, 18. and xix. 11. Rom. viii. 32.*

“ that, in such circumstances, you would put him to death.) And,
 “ as it was prædicted, so it came to passe. For, when you had him
 “ in your power, you, partly through ignorance, and partly through
 “ envy, got him crucified, by means of some of the siners among the
 “ gentiles*. But GOD hath raised him again from the dead; have-
 “ ing loosed the bands of death. For, though death hath con-
 “ quered it's thousands; yet, as he had no sin, it had no power to
 “ detain him. And this, king David, (his great progenitor,) speak-
 “ ing, in the name of the messiah, hath prophetically described^y;
 “ [Psal. xvi. 8, &c.] “ I have the LORD always in my view, and
 “ my dependence is upon his power and continual aid. Therefore,
 “ I am so far from being depressed with fear, that (on the con-
 “ trary) my heart is glad, and my tongue cannot forbear uttering
 “ my joy. For, (let my enemies do their worst) thou wilt not
 “ leave me in the state of the dead, neither wilt thou permit thine
 “ holy one to see corruption. But wilt (by raising me from the
 “ dead) shew me the path of life, and immortality. And then, in
 “ thy presence, I shall have fulness of joy; and pleasure, at thy
 “ right hand; and that for evermore.”

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“ Brethren; permit me to speak freely to you concerning the great
 “ patriarch David. For, he is both dead and buried; and his se-
 “ pulchre (where his body continueth, and is corrupted,) is com-
 “ monly known, by us all, at this very day^z. These words are
 “ not, therefore, in their literal sense, applicable to his case. But
 “ he, being a prophet, and knowing that the most high GOD had,
 “ once and again, sworn solemnly unto him, that the messiah should
 “ descend, from him, as to the flesh; that he might sit upon the
 “ throne of that kingdom, which had been so often promised unto
 “ the house of David: Foreseeing this, I say, and personateing his
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* Ἀσθενεῖς, without strength, ἀσεβεῖς, ungodly, ἐχθροὶ, enemies, and ἁμαρτωλοὶ, siners, were terms, which the jews used to apply to the gentiles in general. [See Locke on Rom. v. 6; 8. and Gal. ii. 15.] And, it is evident, that ἀνόμιον must be so understood here. For, it was, by the hands of the gentiles; that is, of the Romans, that the jews procured JESUS to be crucified. And a like phrase is used, Matth. xxvi. 45. Mark xiv. 41. Luke xxiv. 7. [See, also, Acts iii. 13, 14, 15. Luke vi. 32, 33, 34. compar- ed with Matth. v. 46, 47. and xi. 19. and xviii. 17.]

Ver. 25. Ὁ Δαβὶδ γὰρ λέγει ἐν αὐτῷ. For David speaketh concerning him.] So ἐν signifieth, Eph. v. 32. Elser upon this place, and Gataker upon the title of Marcus Antoninus his book, (which is ἐν ἑαυτῷ, concerning himself) hath produced many places, from some of the best greek authors, where ἐν is understood, in the same sense.

Ver. 29. ^z The sepulchres of the jews, in general, were without the city. But, the sepulchre of David, and his sons, was within the city: and is shewn to travellers, even unto this day. [See Maundrell's travels, third edition, p. 76.]

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“ great descendent ; he, in a just and lively manner, described the resurrection of *the messiah*, in these words ; *Thou wilt not leave me in the state of the dead, neither wilt thou suffer my flesh to see corruption* ^a.”

“ JESUS of Nazareth, I say, whom you lately murdered, is that very person. And him hath GOD actually raised from the dead. Of the truth and reality of which resurrection, we ourselves are witnesses. For, we knew him very well, before he died ; and we saw him, after his resurrection, once and again : talked with him ; eat and drank with him ; handled his body, and had all the satisfaction and evidence, which we could desire. We saw him also ascend up to heaven ; where, being exalted to the right hand of GOD ; and all power committed unto him, both in heaven and upon earth ; and, particularly, haveing received, of *his father*, the promised gift of *the holy spirit*, he hath shed down this plenteous effusion upon us : Some of the effects of which, ye, now, see and hear.

“ His *ascension*, also, was prophesied of, in words, which are not applicable to *David's* case. For, he is not himself ascended into heaven. But he thus prophesied of CHRIST's ascension. [*Psal. cx. i.*] “ The LORD said unto my LORD, [*the messiah*,] sit thou, on a throne, at my right hand ; [or, *possesse thou all power*,] 'till all thine enemies be subdued ^b.”

“ To conclude : The *miracles* of JESUS, whom you crucified ; and, particularly, his resurrection from the dead ; this amazing effusion of *the holy spirit*, manifested in so many extraordinary gifts and *miraculous powers* ; and the prædictions of your *antient prophets* ; — all conspire to convince the whole house of *Israel*, that GOD hath made that very JESUS of Nazareth, *the messiah* ; that is, the anointed king, and LORD of all.”

Such a conjunction of most close and affecting arguments ; and such an home charge of their guilt, in murdering so great and glorious

Ver. 31. ^a These words [*ἡ ψυχὴ αὐτοῦ*, *his soul*,] are not found in the *Alexandrian*, *Cambridge*, *Barb. i.* *Velef.* mss. nor in *Irenæus*, and the *vulgar* and *syriac* versions. [See *Dr. Mill.*] Some, therefore, have been for rejecting them, though others have been for retaining them. The principal argument for retaining them, is, that both *ψυχὴ* and *σῶμα* are found in the sixteenth psalm, from whence this passage is taken. [See *Wolfius* on this place.]

Ver. 35. ^b *Until thy foes be made thy footstool.* This is an allusion to a very antient custom. For, the conquerors used to set their feet upon the necks of the persons, whom they conquered. [*Josh. x. 24, 25. 2 Sam. xxii. 40, 41. Psal. xviii. 40.*] *Vid. Elsner. & Wolf. in loc.*

rious a person, pierced them to the heart. Under which remorse and perplexity, the penitent and well-disposed applied themselves unto St. PETER, and unto the other APOSTLES: "Brethren, what can we; what shall we do, in this case?"

St. PETER replied: "Repent, and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of JESUS, as the *messiah*; and you, also, shall receive some extraordinary and miraculous powers. For the promise of the gift of the holy spirit extends unto you, and to your children; and to persons, at the most remote parts of the earth; even unto all, who shall have the gospel preached unto them, and who shall accept of that divine call."

This is the sum and substance of what St. PETER then said: though he taught them much more particularly; principally designing to prove JESUS to be the *messiah*, that he might induce them to believe in him. And he laid before them, at large, the nature of their [the APOSTLES] testimony; exhorting them, by all means, to comply with his advice; and so save themselves from the infidelity of that perverse generation; and from those divine judgments, which would come upon them, for their disobedience, and amazing wickedness.

His discourse, joined with the labors of the other APOSTLES, had so good an effect, as to convince about three thousand^c; who joyfully imbraced the christian doctrine: and were baptized, that very day, in the name of JESUS, as the *messiah*. For, they already believed in GOD, the father; and were going to be added unto such as had the gift of the holy spirit.

And there is no reason to question, but that, after baptism, the APOSTLES laid their hands upon them all, and imparted unto them the gifts of the spirit; not onely as an evidence of the truth of christianity, in general; but as the spirit of adoption, unto them, in particular; or a proof and assurance, that GOD would pardon and accept them, even after they had been guilty of that crying sin, of consenting to the murder of the LORD of life and glory.

And those three thousand converts did, afterwards, constantly attend upon the teaching of the APOSTLES; holding fellowship and communion with the other disciples; frequently eating and drinking together, especially in the lord's supper^d; as well as offering up their united prayers and supplications unto GOD.

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Ver. 41. ^c See Psal. cx. 2, 3.

Ver. 42. ^d Breaking of bread,] is a phrase, which, in the new testament, signifieth both eating common meals, and celebrateing the lord's supper. It is used of the former, Matth.

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The observation of what passed, struck an unusual awe and amazement, upon the whole city. Nor did any person as yet attempt to crush *the rising sect*. And (considering how inveterate one sect and party are generally against another; — how commonly they all join to crush a rising sect; — and how much hated and despised the name of JESUS was, then, at *Jerusalem*) this argued the care of a watchful and extraordinary *providence* over them; and that GOD would not suffer them to be molested, 'till they had made some progress, and their numbers were augmented.

There were, also, such convincing evidences attended their mission and doctrine, that it required some thought and contrivance to make any tolerable evasion, in order to elude the force of their arguments; or to allege any specious pretences, for apprehending, or punishing, the APOSTLES, and their associates.

But, what still augmented their success, was, that they not only preached in divers *languages*; but, also, worked many other plane and uncontestable *miracles*; and preserved, among themselves, the most beautiful harmony, and inviolable concord. Nay; so ardent was their zeal, and so warm their charity, that such of them, as had goods and possessions, sold them for a common bank; that, while they continued together at *Jerusalem*, their poor *fellow christians* might partake, as any of them should have occasion. 'A noble and eminent instance of that disinterestedness, self-denial, and benevolence, which *the gospel* was designed to produce, in the minds of men. And this is, indeed, the true *christian spirit*; which is carefully to be cultivated, by such as profess themselves to be *the disciples* of JESUS, in every age and nation; though they are not obliged to exert it, in the same kind, or degree.'

Hitherto, those *christian converts*, none of them, neglected the *jewish* worship; but frequented the courts of *the temple*, daily, at the usual hours of prayer and devotion. For they, most probably, reckoned that they were only to superadd *christianity* to *judaism*; and that both *the religious* and *civil* parts, of *the law of Moses*, still continued obligatory.

Remark-

Matth. xiv. 19. and xv. 36. *Luke* xxiv. 30. *Acts* xxvii. 35. And of the latter, *Matth.* xxvi. 26. *Mark* xiv. 22. *Luke* xxii. 19. *Acts* xx. 7. *1 Cor.* x. 16. and xi. 24. It appears to me, that *the lord's supper* was here intended, because it is joined with prayer.

Ver. 44. See CHRIST's prayer for the unity of his *disciples*, *John* xvii. particularly, ver. 21. where he prayeth, "that *they* might be *one*, even as *his father* and he were *one*."

Remarkable was their joy, upon their haveing repented, and acknowledged JESUS as *messiah*. And their mutual affection was sincere and unmixed. *Christian* converse, and praiseing of GOD, was their daily businesse, and entertainment. And they spent their lives, in so pious and virtuous, so patient and modest, a manner; that they had hitherto the favor of all the people. And, every day, upon the evidence, which the lord JESUS CHRIST gave, of the truth of his religion, there joined themselves, unto the christian church, numbers of *the jews*, who were now saved, or entered into the sure way to mercy and salvation ^f.

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These were the *first-fruits* of the conversion of *the jews*, at *Jerusalem*; and the *first period* of their conversion.

CH A P. II. S E C T. II.

Reflections upon some circumstances, which attended the time and manner of the things already related.

BEFORE we procede to the *second period* of the conversion of *the jews*, at *Jerusalem*, (which was the great harvest there; and gathered in, before *the gospel* spread any farther,) we would briefly take notice of the following circumstances.

As *the messiah* was to fulfil all righteousness, and to answer all *the figures*, and *prophecies*, which went before, concerning him; at the time of *the jewish passover*, CHRIST, *our passover*, was sacrificed for us. And, as the sheaf (or first-fruits of barley-harvest) was offered up unto GOD, on the first day of the week, next after *the pass-*
over;

Ver. 47. ^f Τὸς σωζόμενοι, *the saved*,] were those, who were recovered from the common degeneracy and wickedness of the *jews*. [See ver. 40. where St. PETER advised them, σώθητε, "save yourselves from this untoward generation."] A reformed harlot is said to be called [σωζομένη, *one that was saved*,] in one of *Sophocles* his tragedies. But I have not yet met with that passage. *Pricæus* [in loc.] quotes *the table of Cebes*, as using the word, οἱ σωζόμενοι, for *the reformed*. The abandoned, or incorrigibly wicked, are called [*the lost*, ἀπολλυμένοι, 2 Cor. iv. 3.] The reformed, or well-disposed, are here called [*the saved*, σωζόμενοι.] These two sorts of persons are set in opposition to one another, 1 Cor. i. 18. 2 Cor. ii. 15. Those, who are *saved*, or recovered from vice to virtue, will, also, be admitted unto *eternal salvation*. But the word, σωζόμενοι, seems, here, to denote their being *saved* from vice, *reformed*, or *well-disposed* for a reformation.

An. Christi *over*^a; so, on that very day, did JESUS CHRIST arise from the dead, *as the first-fruits of them that sleep* the sleep of death; that he might offer himself up, unto *his father*, a most acceptable offering; and might become the resurrection and the life, unto all the righteous, at the last day.

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The feast of *pentecost* was to be fifty days after *the passover*^b; and it was instituted, in commemoration of GOD's giving *the law*, from *mount Sinai*: Which giving of *the law* was, according to *Maimonides*, and, indeed, according to the reason of things, the great end of GOD's bringing *Israel* out of *Ægypt*. And, at that feast of *pentecost*, the *first-fruits* of wheat-harvest were to be offered up, unto GOD, in two loaves, for the use of *the priests*; upon which loaves, (as upon all the meat-offerings,) oil was poured. And, after that offering, they began to gather in the wheat-harvest; and to complete it, with all possible dispatch. And, finally, that feast, in particular, was accompanied with great joy and rejoicing. — Agreeably to these circumstances of the *shadows*, not onely CHRIST, *our passover*, was *sacrificed for us*; but, fifty days after his resurrection, *the holy spirit* was poured down, upon his APOSTLES, and their company; to teach them *the christian law*, and to enable them successfully to spread it in the world. And, on that very day of the year, on which *the law* had been delivered, from *mount Sinai*, they began to preach *the gospel*, upon *mount Sion*; and *that word of the LORD*, which was to issue forth from *Jerusalem*. And they, having received the *first-fruits* of *the spirit*, gathered in, that day, three thousand souls; whom they presented (or offered up) unto GOD and *the lamb*; hallowed, or anointed, with the unction of *the spirit*, as a kind of *first-fruits* of *the new creation*. Nor did they want the feasting, and the joy. For the rich, among them, sold their possessions, and their goods; and raised a plentiful fund, for the common benefit of *the christians*, while they kept together, at *Jerusalem*. And they, with harmony and unanimity, not onely frequented the temple-worship, every day; but feasted, also, together, in their upper room^c, with gladness and sincerity of heart; praising GOD, in the most joyous and affectionate manner, and having hitherto the favor of the multitude. And then they proceeded, to gather in, and complete, their great harvest, at *Jerusalem*.

^a Lev. xxiii. 10,—14.

^b Lev. xxiii. 15,—21. See the note ^b and ^d ver. 1.

Ver. 46. ^c Κατ' οἶκον, may either signifie, *from house to house*, or *in the house*; that is, in the house, where they had their upper room. When it is used in the former sense, it is generally κατ' οἴκους.

C H A P. III.

The second period of the conversion of the JEWS, at Jerusalem; which was the great harvest there. — Acts iii, iv, v, vi, and vii. chapters.

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The two APOSTLES, PETER and JOHN, go up to the temple; miraculously cure a man, who was forty years old, and who had been lame from his birth. PETER's speech to the multitude, which flocked together, upon that occasion. Acts iii.

IT hath been, already, observed, that the three thousand new converts persevered; that *the christians* had time to form themselves into a body, and to raise a common fund; that they constantly frequented the temple-worship; that they continued, for some time, to have the favor of all the people; and that their number increased every day. — From all these circumstances, I would gather, that *the miraculous cure*, of which St. LUKE is, here, going to give us an account, was some considerable time after the conversion of the three thousand. And, as there was such a great concourse of people, it is highly probable, that it was at the time of one of their *great festivals*. For, at other times, few, besides *the priests*, and *the stationary men*^a frequented the courts of the temple. Perhaps, it might be *the first passover*, or *the second pentecost*, after OUR LORD's ascension; or some *feast* in the succedeing year. Though we cannot determine, with any certainty, at what *particular feast* it might be.

Among the many *miracles*, which the APOSTLES worked, here followeth one, which was in itself great and remarkable; and much more so, as it gathered together a large assembly, and conduced to bring in a very considerable number of *converts*.

Among

Ver. 1. ^a *The stationary men*,] were a number of men, who were chosen to be constantly at *the temple*, to represent the whole congregation, by laying their hands, on the heads of the *sacrifices*, instead of the people. [See Lightfoot's works, vol. I. p. 924, &c.]

An. Christi 33. Tiber. 19. Book I. Chap. III. Sect. I. Acts iii. 1, &c. Among *the jews*, there were three stated hours of *prayer*, every day^b; at which times, some went up to the *temple*, and others prayed, in their own houses, with their faces turned towards *the temple*. The first of these three hours was at nine a-clock in the morning, which was the time of their offering *the lamb*, for *the morning sacrifice*; the second was about twelve a-clock at noon, which *the jews* used to call the time of *the minchah gedolah*, or *great meat-offering*; and the third was about three a-clock in the afternoon; which was the time, when they offered *the lamb*, for *the evening sacrifice*.

St PETER and St. JOHN, (two of prime note among the APOSTLES; the one called *the beloved disciple*, and the other distinguished, by his zeal, and forward affection to his LORD; those two primary APOSTLES, I say,) went up together, to pray, at the temple, about three a-clock in the afternoon, the time of *the evening-sacrifice*, and the last of the three stated hours of *prayer*. And they went into *the court of the women*, through the gate; which, for it's richness, and curious workmanship, was called *beautiful*; and, by *Josephus*, the *Corinthian gate*^c. — About one hundred and eighty years before this, the city *Corinth* had been taken, and burnt, by *Lucius Mummius*, the *Roman proconsul*; because of their insolence to the *Roman ambassadors*. And, in the burning of the city, multitudes of statues and images, of brass, gold, and silver, being melted down, and runing together, they made that mixture, which was from thence called the famous *Corinthian brass*; and which *the ancients* valued above gold, or silver^d. The gate, on the east side of *the temple*, (which led out of the *Chel*, as you went westward, from *the court of the gentiles*, into the *court of the women*;) was made of that famous *Corinthian brass*; and excelled the other gates, in it's dimensions, and in it's workmanship; as well as in the richness of the metal; though most of them were covered over with silver, or gold. — As the two APOSTLES were going to enter in at that gate, they saw a poor man sitting and begging. For he had been lame from his birth. And, as he was poor, and unable to provide himself a subsistence, any other way, his friends brought him daily, and laid him, at that *beautiful gate*, to beg alms of such charitable and devout persons, as went up to *the temple*, to worship GOD. As the two

^b The first and last of these hours are referred to, *Exod.* xxix. 38, 39. *Numb.* xxviii. 3, 4. The second is referred to, *Acts* x. 9. The third is referred to, *Dan.* ix. 21. And they are all three mentioned, *Psal.* lv. 17. *Dan.* vi. 13.

Ver. 2. ^c De Bell. Jud. l. 5. c. 5. § 3.

^d L. Flori, l. 2. c. 16. Plin. l. 34. c. 2.

two APOSTLES drew near *the gate*, the man began to importune them for their charity, Upon which, looking intensely upon him, and perceiving his good disposition of mind, they bid him attend to, and observe, them. The man did so, hoping to receive an alms from them. But, when they had engaged his attention, St. PETER said: "We have no silver, nor gold, to bestow^e, but such good things, " as we have, we are ready to communicate. [And, perhaps, you " will not reckon our *gift* lesse grateful, or lesse valuable.] In the " name of JESUS, who is *the messiah*, and by a power derived from " him, I order you, and give you strength, to rise up, and walk."

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Then, takeing the man by the right hand, he helped him up. And immediately his legs and feet became strong, and perfectly sound. So that, springing up, he found himself able to stand, and leap, and walk. [All which he did, in a kind of transport and unusual joy, upon his so suddenly receiving perfect strength and soundness; of which, before that, he had never had any experience.] And, going along with the two APOSTLES, into the second court of the temple, which was commonly called *the court of the women*, because *the women* were permitted to go so far towards the sanctuary itself, and no farther. — As the man, I say, was there exercising his new power, in walking and leaping about^f, in the most rapturous manner; and giving praise unto GOD; as well as showing himself grateful to the two APOSTLES; — the multitudes, which were then come up to worship, began to take notice of him. For, he was well known, from his beging, daily, in so public a place; and was known, also, to have been always a cripple. But, how this great and sudden alteration happened, was what astonished them all. — The man still hung about his two benefactors; as fearing, perhaps, that he should lose the use of his limbs again, if he parted with them. For he could scarce yet, for joy, believe his own sense, and experience. And, therefore, when the APOSTLES went back again, out of *that court*, into *the court of the gentiles*, he went along with them. And a great multitude followed after them.

The *area of mount Moriah* was too small for that magnificent structure, *the temple*; and the several courts, which were to surround

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it.

Ver. 6. ^e *The charitable fund*, (if it was still continued,) was devoted to the public use of *the christians*. And, therefore, was not St. PETER's property; *that is*, to give away to strangers, as he pleased.

Ver. 8. ^f *Isai. xxxv. 6*. It was prophesied, that *the lame man should leap as an hart*, &c. Now was that *prophecie* fulfilled; as well as by our *savior's* curing multitudes, that had been lame.

An. Christi it. *King Solomon*, therefore, had (with incredible labor and expence)
 34. raised a vast terrasse, about two hundred yards high, from the deep,
 Tiber. 20. subjacent, valley, on the east-side of *the temple*; which addition he
 Book I. made, with very large white stones, strongly cramped and jointed
 Chap. III. together. And this was the onely work of *Solomon's temple*, which
 Sect. I. remained 'till this time. From that addition to *the area*, *the por-*
 Acts iii. *tico*, (or *cloyster*,) built upon it, still went by the name of *Solomon's*
 11, &c. *portico*. In that very *portico*, which was in the outer court, or *the court*
of the gentiles, did a large concourse of people gather, about the two
 APOSTLES; and the man, whom they had *miraculously* cured. And
 they were very much astonished, at so great, so sudden, and, withal,
 so perfect, a cure.

When their attention was thus engaged, St. PETER made a speech
 to them, to this effect: "As you are the descendents of *Israel*, you
 " have in your hands *the sacred scriptures*, which speak of *the mi-*
 " *racles*, worked by persons sent from GOD, in former ages; and
 " *prophecie* of the coming of the great king, *the messiah*: so that
 " you are, now, daily, looking when his *kingdom* will appear. And,
 " in his reign, you expect the effusion of *the spirit*, in that most
 " plenteous manner, which *the prophets* have prædicted. — Have
 " you never seen, nor heard of, the many and evident *miracles*,
 " done, lately, among you, by *JESUS of Nazareth*? And, if you
 " are acquainted with, and know, these things, why do you won-
 " der, so much, at this one miracle? Or why do you look so intense-
 " ly upon us; as though, by our own power, or piety, we had
 " inabled this man to walk? Know you not, that *the true GOD*,
 " (that GOD, in whom both we and you believe, and acknowlege,
 " under the title of the GOD of our renowned ancestors, *Abraham*,
 " *Isaac*, and *Jacob*; unto whom he promised, that, of their seed,
 " *the messiah* should spring: — Know you not, I say, that this onely
 " *true GOD*) is the original source of power and goodnesse; and that
 " he communicateth them, unto men, as he himself pleaseth? This
 " instance of his power and goodnesse hath he communicated, unto
 " this man, by us. And the way and occasion of conveying such
 " a power, unto us, was, by glorifying his son, *JESUS*, whom you,
 " lately, apprehended; and delivered into the hands of *Pontius Pi-*
 " *late*, the *Roman procurator*; before whom, you accused him, as
 " the vilest of malefactors; though *Pilate* himself would have re-
 " leased him, as finding no fault in him; nay, as plainly perceive-
 " ing, that, through envy, you had delivered him into his hands.

But,

Ver. 11. & Joseph. Antiq. Jud. l. 8. c. 3. § 9. & l. 20. c. 9. § 7.

“ But, you would not acknowlege that holy and righteous person
 “ to be *the messiah*; notwithstanding the many and evident proofs,
 “ which he gave, of his haveing a just title to that character. And,
 “ when even *Pilate*, a *gentile*, thought him unjustly accused, and
 “ would have released him, according to his custom, of annually
 “ releasing the prisoner, whom the people should desire; you, at
 “ the instigation of your rulers and elders, refused *JESUS*; and pe-
 “ titioned, that *Barabbas*, a most infamous person, who was the
 “ author of a sedition, a robber, and a murtherer, might be re-
 “ leased, much rather than him. And the holy and innocent *JE-*
 “ *SUS* you persecuted to death; though he (instead of a murther-
 “ er) was the *LORD* and author of *life* itself. — But, though men
 “ treated him thus, *GOD* hath amply vindicated his character, in
 “ raising him from the dead. Of the truth and reality of which
 “ resurrection, we all are living eye-witnesses; fully convinced
 “ ourselves, by many infallible signs and proofs. And, to excite
 “ others to inquire into, and fairly consider, the truth and validity
 “ of our testimony, he hath given us this extraordinary power. For,
 “ by faith in his power, have we perfectly cured this man, whom
 “ you see, here, before you; and who is so generally known a-
 “ mong you, that you may be easily and fully satisfied, both of the
 “ greatnesse, and certainty, of the cure.

“ But, in as much as you have treated the *MESSIAH* thus, my
 “ brethren, through ignorance, and grosse prejudice; (which was,
 “ also, in a great measure, the case of your rulers^h; there is room
 “ for your being pardoned and accepted, upon your sincere, speedy,
 “ and unfeigned, repentence. Nay; and you may farther behold
 “ the wisdom and the goodnesse of *GOD*, who hath so over-ruled your
 “ ignorance and wicked designs, as that the *prophecies*, concerning
 “ the sufferings of *the messiah*, have been thereby accomplishedⁱ.
 “ And, as there is ground for hope and encouragement, let me beg
 “ of you to repent, and immediately accept of *JESUS*, as *messiah*;
 “ that your sins may be blotted out, and the happy and refreshing
 “ times may come upon you, from the presence of the *LORD*^k.
 “ I speak not, concerning the safety and consolation, which imbrace-
 “ ing *christianity* will at present afford you; but of the approach of
 “ that glorious time, when he shall send, again, this same *JESUS*, who

N 2

is

Ver. 17. ^h Luke xxiii. 34. 1 Cor. ii. 8.

Ver. 18. ⁱ Compare with this place, Gen. xlv. 5. and 1. 20. Acts xvi. 27; &c.

Ver. 19. ^k Isai. liii. Jer. xxxi. 34. Dan. ix. 24. Zech. xiii. 1.

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“ is appointed before-hand to be the judge of the world¹, and your
 “ savior, if you believe, and obey, him. I know you expect a
 “ *temporal messiah*, to reign, in this very age, among you, here up-
 “ on earth; and to free you from your present subjection to the Ro-
 “ mans. But, in vane do you expect it. For, *the heavens* have re-
 “ ceived him: and there he must continue 'till the grand time of
 “ the restoration of all things. Nor do I speak of things, wholly
 “ new, and unheard of. For, these things run through *the prophets*,
 “ in general^m; from the begining of *the Mosaic dispensation*, unto
 “ the sealing up of *prophecie*, at the death of *Malachi*ⁿ.
 “ In the first place, *Moses*, our great prophet and law-giver, (*like*
 “ *unto whom, there hath not, 'till our time, risen a prophet, in Israel,*)
 “ did planely prophesie of the coming of such a prophet, as JESUS
 “ of *Nazareth* hath proved himself to be. For, when the people
 “ of *Israel*, our fore-fathers, were terrified, with hearing GOD speak
 “ the ten commandments, in so pompous, terrible, a manner, from
 “ *mount Sinai*; they desired, that *Moses* might speak, unto them, the
 “ words of GOD, for the future; and that they might not any more
 “ hear GOD himself, speaking unto them, in so tremendous a man-
 “ ner, lest they should die with fear. MOSES, in compliance with
 “ their request, thus answereth, in the name of GOD, and prophe-
 “ sieth: *Deut. xviii. 15,—19. The LORD your GOD will raise up, un-*
 “ *to you, a prophet, from the midst of you, of your brethren, (who shall*
 “ *introduce a new dispensation, or be a savior, and law-giver,) like*
 “ *unto me; unto him shall you hearken. According to what you your-*
 “ *selves desired, of the LORD your GOD, in Horeb, [or Sinai,] in the*
 “ *day of your assembling there: Saying, Let us not hear any more the*
 “ *voice of the LORD OUR GOD; neither let us see this great fire, any*
 “ *more; lest it consume us. And the LORD said unto me, They have*
 “ *said very well; and desired nothing, but what is wise and reasonable.*
 “ *I will*

Ver. 20. ¹ There is such a general consent of the MSS. versions, and fathers, cited by Dr. Mill and Mr. Wetstein, in reading *προεχειρισμένον*, [*fore-appointed*,] instead of *προκεκρυμμένον*, [*preached before-hand*]; that I think the former to have been planely the original reading. [Compare Acts xvii. 31.]

Ver. 21. ^m Πάντων, *all*,] is not in Dr. Mill's best MSS. and versions, nor in some of the fathers.

ⁿ Ἀπ' αἰώνος, [*from the begining*,] of what they usually called, *the age then present*; that is, of *the jewish dispensation*. In opposition to which, *the kingdom of CHRIST* was called αἰών μέλλων, *the age to come*. [See on 2 Tim. iv. 10.] To confirm this, it may be observed, that he here begins with *Moses*; and saith nothing of *the patriarchs* before *Moses*; and, particularly, nothing of *Abraham*. No! when the writers of the new testament run up as high as *Abraham*, then the phrase is, *πρὸ χρόνων αἰωνίων*, *before the times under the law*. [See note ⁱ, Tit. i. 2.]

" I will raise them up a prophet, from among their brethren, (who shall be also a savior, and a law-giver; or one, that shall introduce a new dispensation,) like unto thee. And I will put my words into his mouth; and he shall speak, unto them, all that I shall command him. And it shall come to passe, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words, which he shall speak, in my name, I will call him to an account; and he shall suffer accordingly. Thus plainly did Moses prophesie of the things, which are now fulfilled, in JESUS of Nazareth. Yea, and Samuel^o, also; and even all the succedeing prophets, as many of them as have spoken of the days of the messiah, have all, with one voice, foretold what is now come to passe.

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" Be convinced, therefore; and act, like the faithful subjects of the messiah. Methinks, I should be exceedingly concerned, to see you refuse. For, though, considering your crying wickedness, you might expect to be treated, as the worst of enemies; yet, in as much as you are still regarded, as the children [or disciples] of the prophets, and are actually the natural descendents of Abraham; unto whom (if you be obedient) that covenant, which GOD of old made with our fathers; and, especially, with Abraham, doeth primarily belong; by which covenant, it was expressly promised, that, in Abraham's seed, all the nations of the earth should be blessed. — According to the gracious appointment of GOD, unto you, jews, the first offers of mercy are to be made. Nay; unto you, of Jerusalem, (though his crucifiers, and murderers,) GOD, haveing raised up his son JESUS, (as the great prophet^p, of whom Moses prophesied) hath sent him to bless you, with the highest blessings; namely, to save as many of you, as will comply, from your greatest enemies; that is, from your sins, and from the deserved punishment^q. For, that is the grand end and design of our present message, and of the christian revelation."

Ver. 24. ^o That there was no prophet between Moses and Samuel, see Dr. Wotton's *Misna*, vol. i. p. 50.

Ver. 26. ^p *Ἀναστήσας* doeth not, here, refer to the resurrection from the dead, (as it generally does, in other places;) but to *ἀναστήσει*, ver. 22. raising him up, as a prophet, in Israel.

^q See *Wolfius* on the place, who applies the last sentence of this verse, to the jews; and would understand it thus, [upon your turning, every one of you, from your iniquities.] See, also, Dr. Doddridge.

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The two APOSTLES, PETER and JOHN, imprisoned. The christian converts were five thousand. The two APOSTLES brought before the sanhedrim. St. PETER's defence. They are dismissed, with a charge to preach no more, in the name of JESUS; with which they refused to comply. Acts iv. 1,—22.

THIS GREAT MIRACLE, being so commonly known, and believed; and their immediately proceeding to preach *the christian doctrine*, to such a large concourse of people; and that, so openly and undauntedly; alarmed *the jewish sanhedrim*; and, especially, some great men of *the sect of the sadducees*.

Josephus hath described “the *sadducees*, as remarkable for a fierce and cruel temper; and, particularly, that, when they sat in judgment, they were much more rigorous and severe upon criminals, than the *pharisees*.” And, no wonder. For, as they placed all their hopes of happiness, within the compass of this present life, they must have reckoned the disturbers of it to deserve the severest torments; that they might deter men from giving them any uneasiness. Besides; they had no expectations of being called to an account hereafter, or of suffering, in a future state, for the cruelty and severity, which they had exercised, in this world, upon any of their fellow-creatures. These were *the jewish infidels, or sceptical bigots*; who were as ready to persecute, when they had power, as any *religious, or enthusiastic, sect* whatsoever. And, as *the christians* agreed, in so many points of doctrine, with the opposite sect of the *pharisees*; and, particularly, as to the grand article, of *the resurrection from the dead*; the *sadducees*, generally, from this time, proved their bitterest enemies, — We find no converts to *christianity*, from among *that sect*; except the *false apostle at Corinth*, whom I suspect to have been a scribe of the sect of *the sadducees*; as he had persuaded some of *the christians*, of that city, that *there would be no resurrection from the dead*. And he, indeed, was rather an enemy, and a corruptor of *christianity*, than any honor, or advantage, to it.

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Ver. 1. ^a De Bell. Jud. l. 2. c. 8. § ult. Antiq. Jud. l. 13. c. 10. § 6. & l. 20. c. 9. § 1.

The Romans allowed the jews a captain, among the levites, to keep watch, in the courts of the temple; in order to prevent tumults, and disturbances, among the vast concourse of people, which sometimes came thither^b. That captain, with his men, were animated, by their superiors, and particularly by the priests, and the leading men among the sadducees, to go, that very evening, and, by violence, apprehend the two APOSTLES, as they were preaching, to such a numerous assembly, in Solomon's portico, And, having laid hold of them, late in the evening, away they hurried them to prison, or into private custody; where they left them, that night. For they were exceedingly offended, at their preaching, as public persons; and without any licence, or authority, from them; and, particularly, because they declared, that JESUS, whom they had so lately crucified, was risen from the dead; and that he was the messiah; and would, finally, raise all mankind, by the same mighty power. But, notwithstanding the discouragements, which the APOSTLES met with, from the leading men, among the jews; many of the people, who had seen the lame man, after he was healed, and who had heard St. PETER's discourse, were convinced of the truth of his doctrine; and openly imbraced the christian religion, to the number of five thousand^c. It is doubted, by many, whether these five thousand were all converted, at this time; or onely two thousand, added to the three thousand, who were converted, on the memorable day of pentecost? Of the two, I think it more probable, that these five thousand, were all converted, upon this occasion^d. For the historian seemeth to be, here, speaking, onely of what followed, upon this great miracle; and doeth not say, that these new converts, added to the former, made up the number to five thousand. Nor doeth he say any

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^b Dr. Lightfoot hath made it evident, I think, that the jews had such a captain, among the levites, who kept watch, in the courts of the temple. [vol. II. of his works, p. 471.] And Josephus hath mentioned two persons, who were each of them the son of an high-priest, and captain of the temple: *σπαρτυγες*, vel *σπαρτυγαν*, τῷ ἱερῷ; the very phrase, made use of, here. [Vid. *Antiq.* l. 20. c. 6. § 2. collat. cum lib. 2. c. 12. § 6. de Bell. Jud. Vid. etiam de Bell. l. 2. c. 17. § 2. Dr. Lardner's credibility, &c. 3d. edit. part 1. p. 83; 222,—225. Grotius on Matth. xxvi. 45. Dr. Whitby on Luke xxii. 52.] But, I cannot believe, as some have done, that the guard, mentioned Matth. xxvii. 65. was of this sort: because we find the soldiers, who guarded our LORD's sepulchre, were afraid of saying, "that they had slept, when they should have been upon the watch; for fear the Roman governor should have punished them." Whereas; the levites were not (I suppose) so immediately accountable to the roman governor, in such a case.

Ver. 4. ^c When did the philosophers succede so gloriously, in makeing converts to such doctrines, as were calculated to promote truth and virtue, piety and humanity?

^d See this point cleared up, more at large, in the Appendix.

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any thing at all, in this place, about the former converts, Besides, if this was at a considerable distance of time, (as I think it was,) it is highly probable, that many of the three thousand, who were converted, at the first *pentecost*, were gone home to their respective countries. And it will not be thought wonderful, that they should, now, make a more numerous conversion; if it be considered, that they had continued to work *several miracles*, one after another, for so long a time; and had thereby made their divine mission much more plane and evident. When the weight of all their former *miracles* was added to this late evident and extraordinary cure, it was enough to strike a whole nation; and to convince numbers of the well-disposed and attentive.

The next day, after that *great miracle*, and numerous conversion, the *sanhedrim* was convened, the supreme court of *the jewish nation*. It consisted of *the rulers*, or *chief-priests*; the heads of the twenty-four courses; the *elders* of the other tribes; and *the scribes*, who were *doctors* of the law, most commonly of the tribe of *Levi*. That *great council of the nation* sat at *Jerusalem*. And, with them, *Annas*, who had formerly been high-priest; but was ejected, by the *Roman procurator*; and *Caiaphas*, (son in-law to *Annas*,) who was now high-priest. The very persons, who had procured the death of JESUS CHRIST! And, therefore, thought themselves highly concerned to suppress his disciples, and their doctrine. And, along with them, there were *John* and *Alexander*, two persons of distinction, in that age. And other great men of the *high-priest's* kindred.

It was the custom, for the *sanhedrim*, to sit, almost, in a circle, or oval; and to set *the prisoners* in the midst of them. St. PETER and St. JOHN, being so placed, the court demanded of them, “ By what power, human or diabolical, angelic or divine, have you cured this man? Whose name have you invoked, to the working of this miracle? Or, from whom had you your authority to preach, so publicly, unto the people? From us, you had it not; though

Ver. 7. ^e *Josephus* speaketh of the *jews* working cures, by invokeing the name of Solomon. [*Antiq. Jud.* l. 8. c. 2. § 5.] And, (*de Bell. Jud.* l. 2. c. 8. § 7.) that the *Essenes* preserved the name of *angels*: — perhaps, to cure diseases, or work *miracles*, by them. The *Talmud* relateth some ridiculous stories, of working *miracles*, by the *tetragrammaton*, or the *unutterable name*; that is, by mentioning the word *Jehovah*. The seven sons of *Sceva*, the *jewish priest*, had the same opinion, of working *miracles*, by the mention of a name; when they pretended to cure a possessed person, by invokeing the name of JESUS, whom PAUL preached. [*Acts* xix. 13, &c.]

" though we, alone, have the authority to give a commission to any man to do so".

Then St. PETER, being filled with *the holy spirit*, or inspired with *wisdom* and *fortitude* to give a proper answer, before that assembly, which, by *the jews*, was accounted the most august and venerable, — replied; " Ye rulers of the people, and elders of *Israel*; We are willing to acknowledge your authority, as far as GOD and conscience will permit us. And, seeing that we are now apprehended, and brought before you, as *malefactors*, to be judicially examined, concerning this beneficent action; and, particularly, by what means, this man was so suddenly, and perfectly, cured; we are ready to give you all possible satisfaction. And, therefore, desire you, and all the people of *Israel*, to take notice, that, by invoking the name of JESUS of *Nazareth*, and by commission and power from him, we have *miraculously* cured this man. Yes; I say it again, in the name of that very JESUS, whom you, lately, crucified; but whom the GOD of *our fathers* hath raised from the dead; even, by his power, this very man, who, some hours ago, could not so much as stand, can now walk as well as any man; and, is, this moment, standing before you, sound and well. — This JESUS is the stone, who, *though he was despised, and rejected, by you*, who pretend to be *the builders of the church and temple of GOD*; is, nevertheless, *become the chief corner-stone*. For GOD has actually exalted him to the greatest honor and dignity. And, by him, shall *the church of GOD* (gathered out of all nations) be united, and joined together, as the two sides of a building are united, and held together, by *the chief corner-stone*. Neither is there salvation, by any other person. For, there is no other name, known among men; by which, we, who are acquainted with the nature of the gospel, and, with the evidence of it, can rationally expect to be saved^f."

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Ver. 12. ^f " JESUS CHRIST is, undoubtedly, the onely mediator between GOD and man. And his is the onely name, by which we can attain to eternal salvation." But this truth (as some think) ought to be deduced, from other *texts*, and not from this. For *σώσας* is the word made use of, by St. PETER himself, to intimate *the miraculous cure of the lame man*. ver. 9. And it will be evident to any, who can observe the connection, that *σωτηρία* and *σώσωναι*, ver. 12. are made use of, concerning the same *miracle*, and in the continuance of the same discourse.

Though, I am fully persuaded, that *σώω*, or *σώω*, and *σώζω*, are, several times, in the new testament, to be understood of *eternal salvation*; yet, in the following texts, they refer onely to *miraculous deliverances, or cures*: Matth. viii. 25. and ix. 21, 22. and xiv. 30. and xxvii. 42; 49. Mark v. 23; 28; 34. and vi. 56. and x. 52. and xv.

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Acts iv.

13, &c.

The *sanhedrim*, observeing the compofure, *wifdom*, and *fortitude*, of the two APOSTLES; and, knowing them to be unlearned, and onely private, men; who could not be thus *bold*, upon the account of their own *wifdom*, and *authority*, or fkill in *the jewifh* learning; — they were quite amazed. However; they recollected, that they had formerly been feen in company with JESUS, in *whose name*, they now declared, that they had worked *this miracle*. The matter of fact was fo plane, and the force of truth fo powerful, that they could not immediately make the two APOSTLES any answer. Nevertheleffe, they were refolved againft imbraceing their *doctrine*; though they could neither deny, nor ftifle, *the miracle*. They, therefore, ordered them to go out of *the court*. And then, they laid their heads together, and conferred thus: “What fhall we, “ what can we, do, in this cafe? There is no fuch thing, as denying “ *the fact*; it is fo excedeing plane: nor can we ftifle it. For it is “ known, through all *Jerufalem*, that this *miraculous cure* hath been “ done, by them. But, notwithstanding, left their *doctrine* fhould “ fpread, any farther, among the people; and the number of their “ *disciples* ftill increafe; let us feverely threaten them, for what they “ have

xv. 30, 31. Luke vii. 50. and viii. 36; 48; 50. and xvii. 19. and xviii. 42. and xxiii. 35; 37; 39. Acts xiv. 9. [See on 1 Tim. ii. 15.]

And, if the *verb* be fo often ufed, for a *temporal falvation*, why may not the *noun* be fo ufed, alfo? Efpecially, as it is apprehended, that the fenfe and connection of this place planely points to this interpretation. — And this is not the onely place, where it ought to be fo underftood. [See Mr. Locke on 2 Cor. i. 6. See, alfo, Acts vii. 25. and Raphelius on this place.] In the fame fenfe, Horace hath ufed the verb, *feruo*, to *save*, [Hor. ep. ii. l. ii. 138.] where he introduces one, that had been cured of a pleafing phrenzy, faying to his friends, “Truely, my friends, you have killed me, you have not [*saved*, or] cured me, &c.”

— Pol, me occidiftis, amici,
Non fervaftis (ait,) cui fic extorta voluptas.

So far have I argued, in favor of Dr. Whitby's interpretation of this text. But, as it may be objected, “that St. PETER has faid, “There is no other name, — by “ *which we must be saved*.” And it cannot, reasonably, be fupposed, that all the “ perfons, then prefent, were laboring under bodily diforders; and had occafion for, or “ reason to expect, a miraculous cure: therefore, it is moft probable, the APOSTLE is “ not fpeaking of a temporal, but of eternal, falvation.” — To this I would answer, It is poffible that St. PETER might ufe the word [*saved*,] ver. 9. for *the miraculous cure* of the lame man; and the word [*salvation*,] ver. 12. for *everlafting falvation*. In which cafe, I would underftand St. PETER, ver. 10. as afcribing the miraculous cure of the lame man, to the power of CHRIST. And, then, ver. 11, 12. as rifeing higher, or inlargeing his view, and faying, “Though the leading jews had defpifed “ OUR LORD; yet thofe, to whom the gofpel was preached, with fufficient evidence, “ could not expect *eternal falvation*, in the name, or by the power, of any other “ perfon.”

“ have done; and strictly prohibit them, to speak any more, or preach, An. Christi
“ to any person, in this name.” ^{34.}

When they had come to this determination, they called in the ^{Tiber. 20.}
two APOSTLES. And, haveing severely chid them; they concluded, ^{Book I.}
with chargeing them, never to speak one word again, or teach any ^{Chap. III.}
more, publicly or privately, in the name of JESUS of *Nazareth*. To ^{Sect. II.}
which, the two APOSTLES bravely and reasonably replied: “ We ^{Acts iv.]}
“ appeal to your own consciences, whether it be right, and could
“ be justified, in the sight of GOD, to obey you, rather than GOD
“ himself! For GOD hath appointed us to publish what he hath re-
“ veled to us: and we are under strict ingagements to do so.” ^{17, &c.}

In the end, they released them; onely adding farther threaten-
ings. Indeed, they knew not how to have answered it, to the people,
if they had inflicted any punishments upon them. For all the
people took the matter right, evidently perceiveing that it was from
GOD; and giveing him the praise, for this beneficent *miracle*. For,
a *miracle* it was, no doubt; and no trick, nor delusion; the man
himself being present in the *sanbedrim*, and well known to most of
them, from his haveing beged, daily, in so public a place. And
he was, now, above forty years old, and had been lame from his
birth. So that it was an inveterate disorder, incureable (very pro-
bably) by any *medicinal* art; which made the cure the greater, and
the more remarkable.

C H A P. III. S E C T. III.

*The APOSTLES returned to their own company, where they unanimously
prayed for fortitude, and an ability to work more miracles. The
place, where they were assembled, was again shaken; and a second
effusion of the spirit granted. Christianity still gained ground, and
the numbers of the disciples increased. Acts iv. 23,—31.*

THE two APOSTLES, being dismissed by the *sanbedrim*, went
unto their own company; perhaps, the christian church, at
Jerusalem, or the rest of the APOSTLES. —And there they related all
that had passed. Upon which, the whole company lifted up their
voices with one accord, saying, or singing, to this effect: “ LORD
O 2 “ GOD

An. Christi^{34.} “ GOD almighty, creator of heaven and earth! Thy providence is
 Tiber. 20. “ over all thy works; and thou (who knowest the end from the
 Book I. “ begining; and, from antient times, the things, which have, or
 Chap. III. “ shall, come to passe) hast described the vane malice and opposi-
 Sect. III. “ tion of the enemies of thine anointed son, [*Psal. ii. 1, 2.*] say-
 Acts iv. “ ing, *Why do the heathens rage, and the people [of Israel] imagine a*
 24, &c. “ *vane thing? The governors of the earth have set themselves to op-
 “ pose him; and the rulers have conspired, against the LORD, and a-
 “ gainst his CHRIST, [or anointed.]* And, accordingly, hath it hap-
 “ pened. For, as the wicked did formerly conspire against thy
 “ servant *David*; so, lately, in this city ^a *Jerusalem*, both *Herod*
 “ *Antipas, the tetrarch of Galilee* ^b, and *Pontius Pilate*, together with
 “ the *romans* and *jews*, have conspired, against thy holy son *JESUS*;
 “ whom (as soon as he had been baptized by *John*) thou didst a-
 “ noint with the unction of the *holy spirit*; that he might do, what-
 “ soever thou, in thine infinite wisdom, fore-ordained to be done
 “ by him ^c. — And now, LORD, take notice of their threatenings;
 “ and grant unto us, thy faithful servants, all steddiness and fortitude,
 “ in publishing the *christian doctrine*; and assist us, by thy *power*,
 “ to heal diseases, and to work more signs and wonders, in the
 “ name of thy holy son *JESUS*.”

GOD, of old, testified his acceptance of the sacrifices, or prayers, of the pious, by sending down fire from heaven; or by appearing, after some peculiar manner, in the cloud of glory. But, now, the token of acceptance, was, that the house, where they were assembled, was again shaken; and there was a second effusion of the *holy spirit*; perhaps, attended with the like sound, and with the like appearance of a *glory*; as there had been, at first, on the signal day of *pentecost*. It doeth not appear, that they had, by this second effusion, any farther *knowledge* communicated: but they were hereby comforted, after the discouragements, which they had met with, from the *sanhedrim*. And, as they had prayed, for *fortitude*, and a *power* of working more *miracles*; their prayer was heard, fresh *courage*

Ver. 27. ^a These words, [*ἐν τῇ πόλει ταύτῃ, in this city,*] are found, in many of the antient manuscripts, versions, and fathers. [See Dr. Mill.]

^b Matth. xiv. 1. &c. Mark vi. 14, &c. Luke xiii. 31, &c. and xxiii. 7,—12.

^c If the *nominative case* be placed before the *verb*, according to the natural construction, this is the true order of the words. And then, what GOD is here said to have determined before-hand, is not, what those wicked persons were to do to CHRIST; but what CHRIST himself was anointed, with the *holy spirit*, to do; that is, to go about, doing good, or to preach, and work miracles. [Acts x. 38. Vid. Limborch. in loc. and the essay for a new translation of the bible, part 1. p. 80.]

rage infused, and farther *miraculous powers* conferred; to assist them in their work, and to enable them to proceed cheerfully, and with an undaunted steadiness and resolution.

Their fear and concern, before the first effusion of *the spirit*, hath been taken notice of, already. As, likewise, with what *fortitude*, they, immediately after *the spirit* was given, ventured, even in *Jerusalem*, to declare JESUS of *Nazareth*, who had, lately, been murdered there, to be *the messiah*. Upon this first attack of *persecution*, they seem to have been (some of them) a little discouraged. And, therefore, they prayed, for more *fortitude*, and farther divine aid. Their prayer was heard; farther aid was immediately granted. And, upon that, they went on bravely, and successfully. And, by an extraordinary divine assistance, did the APOSTLES give the most clear and convincing evidence, of JESUS his being *the messiah*; particularly, by testifying his resurrection from the dead. And, great success attended their labors; though *the jewish rulers*, both in *church* and *state*, were, generally speaking, their avowed enemies.

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Tiber. 20.
Book I.
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Sect. III.
Acts iv.
31, &c.

C H A P. III. S E C T. IV.

A paradisaical community was restored. The five thousand followed the example of the three thousand. Barnabas, one of the greatest contributors. Ananias and Sapphira attempted to abuse, and pervert, that charitable design. They were detected, and punished. Which struck an awe upon the rest. Acts iv. 32,—v. 11.

IN those first fervors, a *paradisaical* community was restored. And great favor was shown to all the christians. For, as the whole multitude was of one heart, and of one soul; the five thousand, lately converted, followed the example, which the three thousand had, formerly, set them; and no longer claimed any peculiar property, in their own possessions; but gave them up, for the public service. So that, while they continued together, at *Jerusalem*, there was not one indigent person, among them. For, as many as were proprietors of houses, or lands, sold them, and laid down the money,

An. Christi money, at the APOSTLES feet; that they might distribute it, according to the necessity and exigency of *the christians*^a. Among the rest of the contributors, was *Joses*, (whom the APOSTLES surnamed *Barnabas*; that is, *the son of a prophet*, who was qualified, both to *exhort*, and *comfort*^b.) He is, by many, thought to have been the same with *Joseph* called *Barsabas*, Acts i. 23^c. But I look upon them to have been distinct persons. For the character of *Barnabas* is, here,

34.
Tiber. 20.
Book I.
Chap. III.
Sect. IV.
Acts iv.
35, &c.

Ver. 35. ^a *Orobio*, the jew, [in his friendly conference with Limborch, p. 134.] has insinuated, "that it was no small advantage, to poor fishermen, to be treasurers of so considerable a bank." And, some of our late infidels have, in a more indecent manner, taken occasion, from hence, to asperse the APOSTLES of OUR LORD; as if their conduct was influenced, by worldly motives, and temporal views. And, as if they greatly advanced their circumstances in life, by turning APOSTLES. — But their whole character, their upright, generous, and disinterested, behavior; their readiness to sacrifice their lives, for the sake of truth, and the welfare of mankind; show that they were far above falsifying such a trust as this, for the sake of a little money. Accordingly; they, very willingly, transferred the management of this affair, to other hands. Acts vi. 2, &c. — But we ought to take the whole story together. And, then, (besides the honorable testimony, given to them, by St. LUKE, in this very text; namely, that they distributed, unto every man, of that charity, according as he had need:) we must farther consider, that GOD continued, to them, the power of working numerous, astonishing, and beneficent, miracles: and that he enabled one of them to strike two of the christians dead upon the spot, for treachery and dissimulation, with relation to this very charity. — What! would GOD continue to show such peculiar regard to men, that would embezzle part of a public charity, or make any bad use of any part of it. [See Dr. Doddridge in loc.] I must confesse, it raises, in me, a just indignation, to see such ungenerous reflections, thrown out, against the APOSTLES of our blessed LORD, who patiently endured poverty and reproach, hunger and thirst, cold and nakedness, bonds, scourgings, and imprisonments, and (after all) a violent death, to promote truth and righteousness in the earth. — One can hardly help suspecting, that they themselves are men of bad hearts, who are so ready to charge others, upon all occasions, with dishonest designs, and corrupt views: and it seems to intimate, what some men would have done, upon the like occasion. — Name me the infidel, who ever gave such proofs of his honesty, as the APOSTLES of our LORD. — We know, that our modern infidels have, generally, fallen in with the established religion; and have not chosen to suffer any thing, for their particular and well-known sentiments; how contrary soever to those of professed christians around them.

Ver. 36. ^b בר-נבא, [*Bar-nabi*,] signifieth *the son of a prophet*. Some would translate *ὁ υἱὸς παραμύθησεως*, here, *the son of consolation*, and, others, *the son of exhortation*. The greek is capable of both the senses, as well as the hebrew. And it is not easie to decide, with certainty, which was principally intended. If *Joses* had this surname, of *Barnabas*, given him, by the APOSTLES, upon the account of contributeing so generously to the charitable fund; I should think, we ought to interpret it, *the son of consolation*; because he greatly comforted *the christians*, by so liberally providing for their poor, during the time, that such a number of them kept together, at *Jerusalem*. But, if they gave him this name, afterwards; or, upon the account of what was eminently his talent, as a prophet; I am inclined to think, it ought to be translated, *the son of exhortation*. For, *Barnabas* was remarkably fitted to *exhort*; as appeareth from Acts xi. 23.

^c See the note on Acts i. 23.

here, given, as if he had been no where mentioned before. However; I am apt to think, that this *Barnabas* was one of the hundred and twenty, as well as *Joses*, called *Barsabas*. For, he is, here, said to have been full of *the holy spirit*, as well as those, who had it poured out, immediately from heaven. And he was, afterwards, sent out, to *Antioch*, as a *superior prophet*.

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Acts iv.
36, 37.

It is deservedly taken notice of, to his honor, how much he denied himself, to turn *christian*, as being a *levite*; that is, one, who served under the *priests*; and was maintained, by the revenues, which belonged to *that tribe*. And how generous he was, after he became a *christian*. For, (though he could not sell what belonged to him, as a *levite*, in *Canaan*; the paternal estates of *the levites*, there, being unalienable^d; yet) he might have a title to some estate, in *Judæa*, which did not belong to *the levites*; and, possibly, he sold that, to augment this public charity. Or, being a native of *Cyprus*, perhaps, he sold some lands, which belonged to him, in that island; and so contributed, largely and remarkably, towards raising that common fund, for *the christians*; and was, probably, the first, who sold lands, for that purpose, out of *Palæstine*, or at any considerable distance from *Jerusalem*.

Among *the christians*, there was one *Ananias*, who (as if he had intended to equal the zeal and liberality of *Barnabas*) sold a possession of land, towards raising, or supporting, that charitable fund. But, after he had sold it, he conspired, with his wife *Sapphira*, privately to keep back part of the price, and yet publicly to deliver in the remainder, as the whole price; that so they two might be maintained, out of the common stock; as persons, who had given up all that they had. St. PETER, who had *the gift of discerning spirits*; or of knowing some transactions, that were carried on, in secret; immediately detected this lying and deceitful behavior. And, upon *Ananias* his coming, without his wife; and delivering in part of the money, with a pretence, that that was all; — he said: “*Ananias*, “ why have you complied with so monstrous and daring a temptation, as to attempt to deceive *the holy spirit*? Amazeing thing! “ that

Acts v.
1, &c.

^d Lev. xxv. 34.

Ver. 3. ^e *ψευδαδαι*, with an accusative case of the person, after it, signifies [to impose upon, or deceive;] see the LXX, Deut. xxxiii. 29. Isai. lvii. 11. with which compare 2 Kings iv. 16. And, for testimonies from profane authors, see *Stephan. thesaur.* *Grotius*, *Wolfius*, *Wetstein*, and others. But, *ψευδαδαι*, with a dative case, signifies to lye to a person; as, ver. 4. and, frequently, elsewhere. — That *Ananias* might, in scripture-phrase, be said to deceive *the spirit of GOD*, when he onely intended, or attempted, to do it; — see on 2 *Thess.* ii. 4. and *Wolfius* on this place.

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“ that you should phanſy it poſſible to eſcape the all-ſeeing eye of
 “ GOD, when you came to deliver in a part of the money, and
 “ yet would have it paſſe for the whole price of the land! What,
 “ in the name of GOD, could move you to ſell it; unleſſe you had
 “ deſigned honeſtly and charitably? It was your own property, be-
 “ fore it was ſold. And ſo was the price of it, after it was ſold,
 “ and intirely at your own diſpoſal^f. No body inſiſted upon your
 “ devoteing it to the public ſervice. But you, yourſelf, under the
 “ color of a noble and voluntary charity, have entertained a vane-
 “ glorious and covetous deſign. And, to accompliſh this, you
 “ have acted, in a fraudulent and hypocritical manner. In acting
 “ thus, you have lyed; not onely, unto us, men; but, unto GOD,
 “ who hath imploied us, and given us ſo plenteouſly of his *ſpirit*.”
Ananias, finding that he was detected, and hearing the ſharp and
 awful reprimand, was inſtantly ſtruck down, by a divine judgment;
 and expired, at St. PETER’s feet. — The report of ſo remarkable and
 exemplary a puniſhment, caſt a terror, into the minds of all, who
 heard of it. And ſome of the young men, there preſent, wound
 him up, in the beſt manner they could; and, carrying him out of the
 city, they buried him^g.

About three hours after, his wife came in, but without knowing
 any thing, of what had befallen her huſband. And St. PETER put
 it home to her: “ Tell me, (ſaith he) whether you ſold your land,
 “ for juſt ſo much money, as your huſband pretended, and no
 “ more?” “ No, (ſaith ſhe,) we, really, had no more for it.” To
 which, St. PETER replied: “ What is the reaſon, that you have con-
 “ ſpired together, in ſo bold, ſo wicked, and ſo perilous an under-
 “ takeing; as to attempt to deceive *the ſpirit*, which the LORD
 “ JESUS hath ſo evidently given unto us? Behold! I hear, even
 “ now, at the door, the ſound of the young men’s feet, who are
 “ returning, from burying your huſband; and who ſhall, ſhortly, do
 “ the ſame office for you.” The *divine power* did, a ſecond time,
 accompany St. PETER’s words. Upon which, ſhe, alſo, inſtantly,
 fell

Ver. 4. ^f This, planely, ſhoweth, that contributeing to that charitable fund, was,
 not a matter of neceſſity, but purely voluntary. Nor was it of the nature of a *vow*,
 which they ſtood obliged to perform. [See *Numb.* xxx. 2. *Deut.* xxiii. 21, 22, 23.]
Ananias his crime was not *ſacrilege*; but groſſe hypocrifie, or prævarication; telling
 a notorious and deliberate lye, unto the APOSTLES, who had *the holy ſpirit*, in an ex-
 traordinary degree. To them, he pretended, that he brought, into the charitable fund,
 the whole price of the land, when he was conſcious, that he brought in onely a part
 of it. That is, what the ſacred text, moſt evidently, repreſents as his crime.

Ver. 6. ^g *The jews* do, now, interr their dead, within twenty-four hours, at fartheſt,
 from the time of their death. And, generally, much ſooner.

fell down at his feet, and died. And the young men, coming in, and finding her dead, wound her up; and, carrying her out also, buried her by her husband. Thus did St. PETER; not out of a spirit of passion, cruelty, or revenge; but, by a prophetic spirit; not by the sword of *the magistrate*, nor by any power of his own; but by a *miraculous and divine power*; punish the first lye; which was made to tempt (or try) *the holy spirit*, in the begining of his *æconomy*, or *dispensation*. Thus was the dignity of *the spirit of GOD* vindicated, and the honor of the APOSTLES of OUR LORD maintained. For, hereby, it was plane, that they had the *spirit of truth* and of *power*; by which they could easily detect, and punish, the spirit of falsehood; and that they made no pretensions to *the spirit*, in which *the spirit* would not bear them out. This was exercising *the apostolic rod*; concerning which, I have, already, observed, that *the power* was OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST'S; and that the APOSTLES had only an impulse of *the spirit*, upon their minds, by which they were enabled to foretel such extraordinary and divine judgments^h.

Such severity, in the begining of *christianity*, was highly proper; in order to prevent any occasion, for like punishments, for the time to come. Thus, *Cain*, the first murtherer, was most signally punished, by the immediate hand of GOD, As was *Sodom* and *Gomorrab*; which were, in the early ages, distinguished for their filthinesse and abomination. Thus, upon the erecting GOD'S *temporal kingdom*, among *the jews*, *Nadab* and *Abihu* were struck dead, for offering strange fire, before the LORDⁱ. And *Corah*, and his company, were swallowed up alive, by the earth, for opposeing *Moses*, the faithful servant of GOD. And the two hundred and fifty men, who offered incense, upon that occasion, were consumed, by a fire, which came out from the LORD^k. And, lastly, *Uzzab*, for touching the ark, fell, by as sudden and remarkable a divine judgment, when the *kingdom* was going to be established in the house of *David*; to teach *Israel* a reverence for GOD, and divine things^l. Nay; in establishing even *human laws*, a severe punishment, upon the first transgressors, doeth often prevent the punishment of others; who are deterred from like attempts, by the suffering of the first criminals.

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And

Ver. 10. ^h *Porphyry* accused St. PETER, as *cruel*, for inflicting this punishment. To which, the *antients* well answered, "The APOSTLE, PETER, did, by no means, pray for their death; but, by the *prophetic spirit*, denounced the judgment of GOD upon them; that the punishment of two persons might be for the instruction of many."

ⁱ Levit. x. 1, &c.

^k Numb. xvi. 23,—35.

^l 2 Sam. vi. 6, &c.

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34.
Tiber. 20.
Book I.
Chap. III.
Sect. IV.
Acts v.
10, &c.

An. Christi 34. Tiber. 20. Book I. Chap. III. Sect. IV. Acts v. 11, &c. And the effect, in the present case, was accordingly. For a great dread, and unusual awe, fell upon all *the christian church*; and not upon them alone, but upon all others also, who saw, or heard of, what had happened: so that no more hypocrites dared to join themselves to *the christians*, merely with a view to share in the community of goods; lest they should fall under the fate of those two notorious dissemblers. Though, (probably) without such a seasonable detection and severity, they would, in a short time, have been crouded, and over-run, with such *impostors*.

C H A P. III. S E C T. V.

More miracles worked. The high-priest, and his company, (who were chiefly sadducees) incensed. They apprehend all the twelve APOSTLES, and put them in the common prison. An angel delivereth them: and sendeth them to preach, in the courts of the temple. The sanhedrim surprized. St. PETER's defence. Gamaliel prevailed to have them dismissed, and not put to death. The sanhedrim ordered them to be scourged; and then dismissed them. Acts v. 12, to the end of the chapter.

THOUGH the remarkable death of *Ananias* and *Sapphira* made many of the *jews* to reverence the APOSTLES, at a distance; yet it did not deter the sincere and well-disposed from becoming their converts. For multitudes, both of men and women, openly imbraced *the christian faith*. And, in the piazza, (or *portico*,) called *Solomon's*, used they to assemble, with the greatest harmony and unanimity. And, no wonder that *christianity* gained ground; that new converts were brought in, and the old ones confirmed, and established. For, by the hands of the APOSTLES, many *miracles* were worked, and that before multitudes of *the jews*. And, indeed, their fame was spread, so far and wide; and their character was raised so high; that the people were ready to expect every thing, from them, which could reasonably be expected, from persons indued with an extraordinary and *divine power*. And St. PETER, particularly

particularly, (who was honored above all the APOSTLES of the *circumcision*) was looked upon, as excelling in his *miraculous operations*; insomuch, that they laid out many diseased persons, upon beds and couches, in the streets, in order to their receiveing the benign influence, from his shadow, as he passed along, by them. And multitudes, from the neighboring towns, brought in their sick and lunatic persons. And they were all healed.

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34.
Tiber. 20.
Book I.
Chap. III.
Sect. V.
Acts v.
15, &c.

So many uncontested miracles, and such diligence in preaching, made *the christian doctrine* to spread, through *Jerusalem*, with a rapid swiftnesse: Which alarmed *Caiaphas*, the high-priest, and his creatures, yet the more. He had, by his unwearied application, procured the crucifixion of JESUS; and had made one effort, before this, to crush *the christian religion*; and to discourage the two APOSTLES, who were the most active in spreading it. But, when he saw, that it still gained ground, and that their *teaching*, and *miracles*, had made such a number of *disciples*, in that *capital city*; it awakened the envy, zeale, and indignation, of that *high-priest*, and his accomplices. So that they were resolved (if possible) to crush *christianity*, before it spread any farther. His associates, upon this occasion, were, most of them, *sadducees*; who, as they denied the resurrection from the dead, and a future state of rewards and sufferings^a, were the most constant and implacable enemies to *christianity*. And, consequently, the most severe upon them, who attempted to spread it. In the warmth of their zeale, they now apprehended all the twelve APOSTLES, as being the ring-leaders of the *sect of the christians*. And away they hurried them, for that night, to the common prison. And, there, shut them up, in close custody. But one, stronger and mightier than the whole *sanhedrim*, even the LORD JESUS CHRIST, whom they so vigorously opposed, dispatched an *angel*, that very night, who opened the prison-doors, and brought out the APOSTLES: withall ordering them, notwithstanding the opposition of the *sadducees*, and leading men among the *jews*, to go and preach, the next morning, publicly, in one of the courts of *the temple*; and there assert *the resurrection from the dead*, and that life and immortality, which (however denied by the *sadducees*) is brought so clearly to light, in the *gospel*. In obedience to the heavenly message, the APOSTLES, with an undaunted heart, did go

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to

Ver. 17. ^a The *sadducees* are charged with receiveing none but the five books of *Moses*; but that is a mistake — [See F. Simon's *Crit. hist. of the old testament*, p. 108, &c. Mr. Jortin's *Appendix to the second volume of remarks on ecclesiastical history*, N^o. 1.]

An. Christi to the temple, early in the morning. And, there, in the most public manner, taught the people the *christian doctrine*.

34.
Tiber. 20.

Book I.
Chap. III.

Sect. V.

Acts v.

21, &c.

It is a wonder, that we hear nothing of *Pontius Pilate*, the *roman procurator*, all this while. But it is possible to account for his silence, and passive behavior. For, having been cruel and tyrannical in the beginning of his reign, he had rendered himself odious to the jews. And, therefore, stood in awe of them; as fearing, that they would accuse him of male-administration, before *Cæsar*, the *roman emperor*; and so procure his confinement, banishment, or, (perhaps) even his death. Over-awed by the dread of this, he permitted them, by mere clamor, to prevail to have JESUS crucified. And when they found that they had prevailed, in one instance, and had him so much in their power, it is no wonder, that they proceeded to act as they pleased, in other instances; and that they harassed the APOSTLES and disciples of JESUS. However; we shall find, in the sequel, that, notwithstanding all *Pilate's* base compliances, they procured his banishment; just as *Flaccus* was accused, by those very *Ægyptians*, whose tool he had been so long, and so notoriously.

Though the APOSTLES were preaching, in one of the courts of the temple, according to the command of the angel, who had miraculously delivered them; the *high-priest*, and his company, supposed that they had them still in safe custody. And, as restless to persecute and suppress them, they called together the *sanbedrim*; that is, the whole senate of the children of *Israel*. And then sent men, to bring them out of the prison, and present them before them. The officers, whom they sent, quickly returned, and told their masters; "We found the prison shut, indeed, with all imaginable safety; and the guards, keeping watch, before the doors, with all care and fidelity; but, when we went in, we could find no prisoners."

This report struck a strange and unusual damp upon the whole court. And, when they found themselves baffled so often, the greatest enemies of the APOSTLES began to doubt about the event. They had obstinately held it out, against all the miracles, which CHRIST himself had worked, and the many evidences of his divine mission; and were continually plotting his death; as satisfied, that that would put an end to all trouble, from that quarter. But, when they found that, after his death, his disciples carried on the same design; and worked miracles, also, in his name, to support their mission and doctrine; they saw no end of the affair, and were at a loss what

what course to take next. And, (which greatly added to their surprise,) while they were in this consternation, there came one into the court, who told them; "The very men, whom you imprisoned, yesterday, are now teaching the people, in one of the courts of the temple."

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24, &c.

Besides the garrison, which the *romans* kept, in the tower of *Antonia*, the *jewish priests* kept watch, in three places of the temple; and the *levites*, in twenty-one places more. Over every one of these watches, there was a captain. And the captain of the temple seemeth to have been the chief captain over them all. He was called, by the *jews*, the ruler of the mountain of the house. For, (as hath been observed above,) the *romans* allowed him to keep the peace, and preserve *decorum*, in the courts of the temple^b. And, as he, and the guards, which were under him, were at the beck of the *sanhedrim*, they were the *officers*, whom they sent to fetch the APOSTLES. As the people were attending, upon the preaching of the APOSTLES, in great numbers; and highly revered and respected them; the *officers* dared not to bind them, or use any manner of violence towards them, lest the people should have stoned them, for abusing persons, who gave the most evident proofs of being sent of GOD, and miraculously assisted by him. It is strange, indeed, at first view, that those very people, who had, not long ago, voted for the crucifixion of CHRIST, should now show so great an affection for his disciples. But, if we consider that the common people do, in many cases, judge, without those fixed, and inveterate, prejudices; which intangle the minds of their superiors; and how much the beneficent and uncontestable *miracles*, worked by the APOSTLES, must have affected them; the wonder will be much less, at this so great and sudden a change. Especially, if it be, also, considered, how vehemently they longed to throw off the *roman yoke*, and regain their antient liberty; — a passionate concern for which, they still retained; notwithstanding they had so often been baffled. From the many evident *miracles*, worked in confirmation of OUR LORD's resurrection, and ascension; and the strong proofs there were, of his being the *messiah*; they (very probably) were still ready to hope, that he would, some way or other, bring about the deliverance, which they so much expected, and desired. And, therefore, they over-awed their *superiors*, from putting the APOSTLES to death; or doing them the harm, which they would, otherwise, have done them,

As

Ver. 26. ^b See on chap. iv. 1.

An. Christi 34. Tiber. 20. Book I. Chap. III. Sect. V. Acts v. 27, &c. As soon as ever they appeared in the open court, the *high-priest* began to exclaim against them, in a very passionate manner: "It is but a little while ago, that we called two of you to an account, (saith he,) threatening, and strictly chargeing, you, not to teach the people any more, in the name of this man, this contemptible master of yours. And, yet, contrary to our expresse injunctions, you still procede; and have, already, filled this large city, *Jerusalem*, with your doctrine. Nay; and you endeavor to incense the people against us, by throwing upon us the guilt of the murther; as if he had, by our means, been unjustly put to death."

St. PETER, (as the mouth and præfident, and with the consent and approbation, of the other APOSTLES,) replied: "It is reasonable that we should obey GOD, rather than *men*. The GOD of our *fathers*; that GOD, whom you and we both worship, hath actually raised again JESUS of *Nazareth*; whom you, not long ago, apprehended; and unjustly brought to the cruel and ignominious death of the crosse. Him, I say, hath GOD raised up, to universal power and dominion; haveing exalted him, even to his own right hand, as a prince, and a savior, to bring *men* to repentence; by proclameing, with sufficient evidence, the doctrine of pardon, and acceptance with GOD; and giveing, unto the descendents of *Israel*, space to repent; and full assurance, that, upon their repentence, he will grant them full remission of sins. And you, even you, who have been his betrayers and murtherers, may, yet, upon your repentence, find pardon at his hands. Nor do we say these things, without proof. For, of the truth and reality of these things, and, particularly, of his resurrection from the dead, we are *witnesses*. And so, also, is *the holy spirit*, which GOD hath most graciously given, unto all, who are obedient to this *divine doctrine*. And the promise extendeth to all, who will yet comply."

This answer (as might be expected, considering their rooted prejudices, and inveterate malice,) cut them to the heart; and put them upon

Ver. 29. * When *Socrates* (the glory of the heathen world) had made it his business to teach youth their duty, in a manner far superior to all around him, his enemies so far prevailed against him, as to try him for his life; and got him condemned to drink the fatal cup of poison; — when he was upon his trial, among other things, he was commanded to do so no more. To which he bravely answered, "O ye *Athenians*, I do indeed, most affectionately love you. *But I will obey GOD, rather than you.*" [*Vid. Plato. in Apol. Socrat. p. 12.*] Gloriously said, indeed! but not more gloriously, by SOCRATES; than by St. PETER.

upon plotting and contriveing *the death* of the twelve APOSTLES, as *the onely effectual way to prevent the farther spread of christianity.* And this, indeed, is the common method of wicked men and bigots; when they are armed with power, and ingaged to oppose plain truth, and clear evidence! But, as GOD, by his wise and over-ruling providence, had hitherto protected the APOSTLES, and was concerned for their farther successful progresse; he gave a turn, in the following manner, to the vile proceedings of that wicked confederacy. One *Gamaliel*, a great *Rabbi*, or *doctor of the jewish law*, (who is said to have been the son of *good old Simeon*, that took up *our savior* in his arms, and then desired to die in peace, because his eyes had seen *the messiah*; Luke ii. 25, &c. and who was actually *the master* to *Saul of Tarsus*, that was afterwards *the famous St. PAUL*, the great APOSTLE of *the gentiles*; — this great *Rabbi*, I say,) stood up; and, ordering the APOSTLES to be had out of the court, he spoke to *the sanhedrim*, to mitigate the ardor of their rash zeale.

His influence was much greater, as he was of the sect of *the pharisees*. For that was the popular sect, and the body of the *jewish nation* were, in sentiments, *pharisees*. They were much more friendly to *the christians*; not onely as they were, generally, milder, and more merciful; but as they (in opposition to the doctrine of *the sadducees*) held the resurrection of the dead, and a future state of rewards and punishments. As this *Rabbi*, therefore, was so great a man with that popular sect, it is no wonder that the following speech had so great an influence upon *the sanhedrim*; more especially, as he fell in with their sentiments, and plainly intimated his expectation of *the jews* regaining their liberty. “Ye rulers of *Israel*, (said he,) be cautious “ what you do with these men under examination. You know “ very well what befel *Theudas*^d, who rose some time ago, and “ gave

Ver. 36. ^d *The essay for a new translation of the bible*, would place [μετὰ τὸν, after him,] at the end of ver. 36. and not at the beginning of ver. 37. that is, “*Theudas* was slain; and his followers brought to nought after him.” By such a manner of pointing the words, that author would intimate, that this might be the *Theudas*, mentioned by *Josephus*, though he did not appear ’till several years after *Judas of Galilee*. I suspect the propriety of the *greek*, in that connection. But there is another, and an invincible, objection against that interpretation; namely, this *Theudas* must have been a different person from that, mentioned by *Josephus*; [Antiq. l. 20. c. 5. § 1.] because that *Theudas*, of whom *Josephus* there speaketh, rose up, about ten years after this time. And, therefore, *Gamaliel* could not possibly refer to him.

The *jews* were very apt to call several persons, by the same name. And *Grotius* hath observed, that *Theudas*, in particular, was a common name among them. *Josephus* intimateth, that the *jews* were so very desirous of regaining their liberty, that they

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“ gave out, that he was a person of eminence and distinction^e;
 “ sent to deliver *our nation* from the power of *the romans*, and to
 “ make them a free people. Upon which pretence, about four
 “ hundred men joined him. But he himself was slain; and his fol-
 “ lowers, also, were either slain, or dispersed; so that his preten-
 “ sions came to nothing. After him, rose up *Judas of Galilee*^f; when
 “ this land of *Judæa* was reduced to a *roman province*; and the
 “ taxes, which are paid to *Cæsar*, were first levied. And a multi-
 “ tude of the people followed him. But neither did he effect our
 “ deliverance. For he himself was put to death, and all his follow-
 “ ers dispersed, Yet, as we still expect deliverance; and these men
 “ have already worked great and evident *miracles*; it is my advice,
 “ that you would permit them to go on, without molestation; as
 “ not knowing how much their attempt may end in our favor. For,
 “ suppose this their design be no more than an human contrivance;
 “ and they are not the persons, who are to deliver us; you will, in
 “ a little while, see it all fall to the ground. But, if it should
 “ prove, that they are imployed of GOD, in this matter; they may
 “ yet, some way or other, bring about what we so ardently desire.
 “ And, therefore, have a care of attempting any thing, against their
 “ lives; as you would not be found to resist the will of GOD^g, who
 “ is the onely king of *Israel*; and who hath promised, in his due
 “ time, to redeem his people.”

This

they attempted it, under various heads and leaders: — Even many more than he hath particularly mentioned. [*Antiq. l. 17. c. 10. § 4, &c.*] However; that *jewish histo- rian* hath mentioned no less than three *Simons*, who were impostors. [*Antiq. l. 17. c. 10. § 6. l. 20. c. 5. § 2. & c. 7. § 2.*] And two *Judas*'s, besides *Judas of Galilee*, who disturbed *Judæa*, in a very short time. [*Antiq. l. 17. c. 10. § 5. & de Bell. Jud. l. 1. c. 33. § 2,—4.*] It is, therefore, not improbable, that there should be two *Theudas*'s engaged, within a few years, in the like bold and desperate undertaking. And *Origen* against *Celsus* [l. 1. c. 6. p. 44. edit. *Spencer*, 4to. *Cantab.*] hath expressly told us, that the *Theudas*, mentioned in the *Acts*, and that mentioned by *Josephus*, were two distinct persons. [See this particular handled, at large, by Dr. *Lardner*, in his *Credibility of the gospel-history*, part 1. edit. 3. p. 921, &c. See, also, *Casaubon*. in *Baron. annal. exercitat. 2. n. 53. p. 178, &c.* *Grotius*, *Hammond*, and *Whitby*, on this place: *Pearson. lection. in Acta apostol. p. 49.*]

^e Μεγαλ is added in many of the antient manuscripts, versions, and fathers. [See Dr. *Mill* and Mr. *Wetstein*.]

Ver. 37. ^f *Josephus* hath called him, *Judas the Gaulonite*. [*Antiq. Jud. l. 18. c. 1. § 1.* But he hath called him *the Galilean*. [Sect. 6. of the same chapter; & *de Bell. Jud. l. 2. c. 8. § 1.*] Perhaps, he was borne in *Gamala*, a city of *Gaulonitis*; and educat- ed, or lived, in *Galilee*. Otherwise, these two different accounts of *Josephus* can hard- ly be reconciled; unlesse we should suppose, that, in one of the places, there is a mis- take in the reading. For, *Gaulonitis*, and *Galilee*, were distinct countries.

Ver. 39. ^g Εἰσέτε μὴ δὲ θεοῖς μενεαίνεμεν ἵνα μάχεσθαι. [*Hom. Il. ε. 606.*]

This speech of Gamaliel, seemeth, to me, to have been made, partly, in opposition to *the sadducees*; partly, out of policy, to fall in with the popular sentiments, at that time, concerning the APOSTLES; that the people might still keep up their veneration for him, and for the other leading men among *the pharisees*. But, he seemeth to have spoken, after that manner, chiefly, from an expectation of a temporal deliverance; and a strong desire to see it accomplished, by the APOSTLES of JESUS, rather than not at all. Had he made such a speech, out of a love to liberty, and free inquiry, he must have gone upon the generous principles of christianity; and have been, (as some have represented him) at least, secretly, a friend to the christians. But, he appeareth to have had no such favorable sentiments of *the christians*; nor any such concern for the cause, in which they were engaged. For he is said, to have made, or, at least, to have approved of, a prayer against *the christians*; which *the jews*, to this day, retain in their liturgy; and in which *the christians* are called *heretics*, and GOD is petitioned to destroy them^h. From what principle, or view, soever, Gamaliel made it, his speech had so good an effect upon *the sanhedrim*, as that, instead of putting the twelve APOSTLES to death, they called them in, and onely ordered them to be scourgedⁱ. I suppose, it was the inflicting upon them, what St. PAUL calleth *the forty stripes, save one*^k. For, the romans did, then, allow *the jews*, to make use of that punishment, as they saw proper. And, after the APOSTLES were scourged, *the sanhedrim* repeted their farther threatenings; "strictly chargeing them, not to preach any more in the name of JESUS." And, then, they released them.

They (brave and excellent men!) departed from *the sanhedrim*; not at all dejected; but rather rejoicing^l, and accounting it an honor,

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nor,

^h Vid. Maimon. *Mishnæ suæ*, tom. I. c. 2. Lightfoot in loc. vol. I. p. 278. & vol. II. p. 657. Prideaux's connection, &c. vol. I. p. 375; 377.

Ver. 40. ⁱ See this, and such like persecutions, prophesied of, *Matth. x. 17. and xxi. 35. and xxiii. 34. Mark xii. 5. and xiii. 9. Luke xx. 11.*

"This punishment, now ordered by *the sanhedrim*, it is likely, was in some open market-place, whereby the sufferers were exposed. And, therefore, it is said, *They departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing, that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name.*" [See Dr. Lardner's *Credibility*, &c. part I. p. 110. third edit.] Ver. 40. The APOSTLES are represented as called in, and beaten with rods, or scourged, before *the sanhedrim*; and then, [ver. 41.] as departing from *the sanhedrim*, &c. If they were scourged, in the presence of *the sanhedrim*, that was, certainly, being exposed, before the highest, and most venerable, court, among *the jews*; and suffering great shame and indignity, in the esteem of the whole nation.

^k 2 Cor. xi. 24. with which compare Deut. xxv. 2, 3. *Jos. Antiq.* l. 4. c. 8. § 21. Ver. 41. ^l See *Matth. v. 11, 12.*

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nor, publicly, to suffer such indignities, as a testimony of their affection for their *great LORD and MASTER*; and of their zeal to obey him, in the midst of all discouragements. But they ceased never the more, to preach daily, in the courts of the *temple*; as well as in the house, where their upper room was^m; that *JESUS of Nazareth* was the promised and long-expected *messiah*.

C H A P. III. S E C T. VI.

Some of the christians, hebrews; and others, hellenists. The widows of the latter are neglected, in the daily distribution of the charity. Hence seven deacons, or treasurers, were chosen. The APOSTLES procede in makeing converts. Acts vi. 1,—7.

THERE is not all the light, that one could wish for, concerning the distinction of *the jews*, into *hebrews* and *hellenists*, or *græcists*. But the following appeareth to me the most probable account. The *jews*, who inhabited *Judæa*, and those of the *eastern dispersions*, did generally retain the *syro-chaldaic*, which, in the new testament, is called *the hebrew language*. But, those of the *western dispersions*, generally, made use of the *greek*; which was, then, a language, that prevailed, more universally than the *french tongue*, now, prevails. The former were called *hebrews*; and the latter, *hellenists*, or *græciseing jews*. And of this sort were most of the *Roman, Græcian, and Ægyptian jews*; as well as the *profelytes of righteousness*, of the *western dispersions*.

After the time of *Ezra*, the *scriptures* of the old testament were read, to *the jews*, in their synagogues, in the *original hebrew*; and interpreted in *chaldee*: because the common people had forgotten the *original hebrew*, by living so long in *Chaldæa*. But *the jews*, who were planted at *Alexandria*, in *Ægypt*, seem, generally, in proceſſe of time, to have forgot both the *hebrew*, and the *chaldee*. And, by converseing so much in a *græcian city*, to have fallen into the use of the *greek language*. Hence, a translation of the *scriptures*, for the use of the common people, became necessary. And part of the

version,

Ver. 42. ^m Κατ' ὄνομα. See the note on chap. ii. 46.

version, which goeth under the name of *the septuagint*, was made, An. Christi
 by some of the learned men, among *the jews*, there; and is thought ^{34.}
 to have been first made use of, in that city, instead of the *chaldee*. ^{Tiber. 20.}
 This opinion was first mentioned, by the very learned *Scaliger* ^{a.} Book I.
 And herein he has been followed, by other learned men; *namely*, ^{Chap. III.}
 bishop *Walton* ^{b.}, father *Simon* ^{c.}, *Drusus*, *Grotius*, *Hammond* ^{d.}, *Pri-* ^{Sect. VI.}
deaux ^{e.}, and others. There is a passage in *Justin Martyr*, and ano- ^{Acts vi.}
 ther in *Tertullian*, from whence *Scaliger*, and his followers, have ^{1.}
 attempted to prove, that *the hellenistical jews* read the scriptures of
 the old testament, in the *septuagint* version, publicly, in their syna-
 gogues. But *Vitringa* ^{f.} has shown, that the passages, alleged from
Justin Martyr and *Tertullian*, imply no such thing: And that *the*
jews did not, any where, at that time, read the scriptures, in any
 other language, than the *hebrew*; though they had, commonly, an
 interpreter, who spoke the interpretation in *chaldee*; but was not
 allowed to read it, out of a book. It is true, that, in *Justinian's*
 time, there was a dissension, among the *jews*, about reading the
 scriptures, in the synagogue, in *greek*; (I suppose, after they had
 been read, in the original *hebrew*.) That caused great divisions and
 disturbances, among *the jews*. Upon which, they appealed to the
 emperor *Justinian*; who, thereupon, published a decree, which is
 still extant among his *novel constitutions* ^{g.}; whereby he ordained,
 "that *the jews* might read the scriptures, publicly, in *greek*; or in
 any other language; according to the country, in which they
 should dwell." That decree was made, about the middle of the
 sixth century. And, suppose the custom of reading the scrip-
 tures, in *greek*, had been introduced, by some *hellenistical jews*, a
 century before; yet, the other *jews*, evidently, opposed it, as an in-
 novation. It comes, therefore, too late to prove, what was the
 custom, in the days of the APOSTLES. Indeed, it does not appear,
 ever, to have prevailed. And the custom of the *jews* is, now, what
 it seems, generally, to have been; *namely*, to read the scriptures, in
 their

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Ver. 1 ^a Vid. *Scaliger*. Animadver. ad *Euseb.* p. 134. col. 2. alias, num. 1734. &
 in Canon. Ifagog. 278. *Crellium* in 1 Pet. i. 1. *Scaliger*. in Johan. xviii. 31. versus
 fin.

^b In *biblia polyglotta*, prolegom. ix. p. 60.

^c *Critical history of the old testament*, b. ii. p. 120. b. iii. p. 173, 174. and of the
new testament, part ii. p. 94, &c. See, also, my note on *Acts* viii. 1.

^d In loc.

^e *Prideaux* his connection, &c. vol. 2. p. 45.

^f *De synagoga vetere*, l. 3. part 2. c. 27. p. 954, &c. *Boss* prolegom. ad *septua-*
gint. p. 5.

^g *Novel.* 146. *Photii Nomocanon.* xii. 3. *Prideaux* his connection, &c. vol. 2.
 p. 50.

An. Christi their synagogues, in the original *hebrew* onely. — Upon the whole;
 34. I am inclined to Dr. *Lightfoot's* opinion^h; namely, that, by the *hel-*
 Tiber. 20. *lenists*, we are to understand *the jews* of the western dispersion, ma-
 ny of whom lived among the *greeks*; and who, in general, used *the*
 Book I. *greek* language, as their mother-tongue; by way of opposition to
 Chap. III. *the jews* of *Judæa*, and of the eastern dispersion; who spoke *the*
 Sect. VI. *syro-chaldaic*, which was, then, commonly called *the hebrew*, tongue.
 Acts vi. I. Onely, there does not appear to be sufficient evidence, of *the hellenists*
 reading the scriptures in *greek*, publicly, in their synagogues;
 though it is highly probable, that many of them valued the *septuagint*
 version, and read it, in private.

Hence, very probably, those *jews* were called *hellenists*, or *græ-*
ciseing jews; because of their useing *the hellenistic*, or *greek*, lan-
guage, in their common conversation. And, by that name, they
 came to be distinguished from *the hebrew jews*, who used onely *the*
hebrew tongue — Those different customs are said to have made a
 sort of *schism* between them. In allusion to which, St. PAUL seems to
 have mentioned it, among *the jews*, that he was an *hebrew* of the
*hebrews*ⁱ; that is, a descendent of that sort of *jews*, who were most
 highly esteemed, upon the account of their useing *the hebrew* lan-
guage. And *Josephus* plainly intimateth, that the *greek tongue*
 was contemned, by *the jews*, [of *Judæa*, particularly.] For, speak-
 ing of himself, and his ability to write *the jewish antiquities*, in
greek, he saith, “ I diligently applied myself to the understanding *the*
 “ *greek language*, after I had made some progresse in the rudiments
 “ of *grammar*. Though a custom of our country hindered me, from
 “ attaining to the exact pronounciation of it. For, *our nation* little
 “ esteems those, who have learned the *languages* of *several na-*
 “ *tions*^k.”

That this was the distinction, which St. LUKE here designed,
 may, I think, be supported, by the following arguments: (1.) Not
 onely *Chrysostom*, *Oecumenius*, and *Theophylact*; but (according to
Grotius,) *the syriac version*, also, hath rendered ἐλληνιστῶν, *the jews*,
who understood, or *spoke*, *greek*. Now, that *version* is, by some, reck-
 oned to be very *antient*; and might, possibly, be made, while that dis-
 tinction was still known, and kept up, among *the jews*. Nay; it might
 have

^h See *Lightfoot's* works, vol. 1. p. 279; 777, &c. vol. 2. p. 558; 659, 660, 661; 783, 784; 787; 798; 802, &c. 810.

ⁱ Phil. iii. 5.

^k *Antiq. Jud.* l. 20. c. ult. § ult. And *Josephus* calls himself, “ by birth, an he-
 brew,” of Jerusalem. *De bello Jud. Procem.*

have been made, while that distinction was continued : and yet not be so antient, as it is, by some, supposed to have been.

(2.) Numbers of *the jews*, both of *the eastern* and *western* *dispersions*, came up to *Jerusalem*, to worship, at the *great festivals*. [Acts ii. 5, &c.] And, therefore, it is no wonder, that there should be several converts to *christianity*, among each sort. (3.) Though some have apprehended, that these *hellenists* were *profelytes of righteousness*; I can hardly think, that *the profelytes of righteousness* were so very numerous, as these *hellenists* appear to have been.¹ (4.) St. PAUL, (who thoroughly understood the distinctions, which prevailed, among *the jews*, in his time,) doeth planely intimate, that there was a difference between an *hebrew* and an *Israelite*; by asserting, that he himself was not onely an *Israelite*, but an *hebrew*, also^m. For, a person might be descended from *Israel*, and yet not be an *hebrew*, but an *hellenist*. And he, likewise, intimates, that there was a difference between both of them; and one, who had not descended from *Abraham*, but was a *profelyte of a foreign extraction*. For he adds, to his being an *hebrew*, and an *Israelite*; that he was, also, of the seed of *Abraham*ⁿ. The same distinction he hath repeted, [Phil. iii. 5.] where he saith, that he had been circumcised, the eight day from his birth; and was descended, not onely of the stock of *Israel*, and, particularly, of the tribe of *Benjamin*; but was, also, an *hebrew of the hebrews*. Whereby, he appeareth, to me, to have planely intimated, that a man might be of the stock of *Israel*, and of the tribe of *Benjamin*; and, yet, not be an *hebrew of the hebrews*: but that, as to himself, he was, both by father and mother, an *hebrew*; or of the race of that sort of *jews*, which were, generally, most esteemed by their nation.

It may, possibly, be objected, “ that, according to the above-mentioned distinction, St. PAUL must have been an *hellenist*, and not an *hebrew*. For, he was borne, at *Tarsus*, in *Cilicia*, which was a *greek city*; and he himself spoke *the greek language*.”

Answer. His parents might, both of them, be *hebrew jews*, who had removed into a *græcian city*; and, yet, retained the use of the *hebrew language*; especially in their *religious exercises*, both private and public. Though, as living in a *greek city*, they might, also, learn that language; and, frequently, use it, in their common discourse. Their giving their son an education, among *the hebrew jews*,

¹ Compare, with this place, Acts ix. 29.

^m See Mr. Locke's paraphrase on 2 Cor. xi. 22.

ⁿ 2 Cor. xi. 22.

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An. Christi *jews*, at *Jerusalem*, where he seemeth to have been sent very young, is a confirmation of this.

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Tiber. 20.

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Chap. III.

Sect. VI.
Acts vi.

I.

It is evident, that *Saul* understood the *hebrew* language, before he was a *christian*. For, at his conversion, OUR LORD spoke unto him, in the *hebrew* tongue. [Acts xxvi. 14.] And, by his answer, he showed, that he readily understood what was said to him. Whereas; we have no such expresse proof of his then using the *greek* language, supposing he did then understand it; — which I am, indeed, inclined to think he did. Again, [Acts xxi. 40.] he spoke to the *jews*, at *Jerusalem*, in the *hebrew* tongue. And, when they heard that he spoke to them in *hebrew*, they were the more silent. [Acts xxii. 2.] That circumstance procured him a greater regard: They were so much prejudiced in favor of the *hebrew* tongue. Though, if he had spoke *greek*, the generality of them could have understood him.

If St. PAUL's parents were *hebrews*, (and such he himself asserteth them to have been,) it is no wonder, that they should educate their son, in the same way. For it cannot be questioned, but that many *jews*, of the *eastern* *dispersions*, removed into the *west*; and many of the *western* *dispersions*, into the *east*. And, yet, they, who were so tenacious of the most minute customs, in which they had been educated, would scarcely alter them, immediately, upon changing their climate.

Had the distinction been the same, in this place, with that, Acts ii. 10. it is probable St. LUKE would have called them *jews* and *profelytes*, here; as well as there. And the objection, taken from Acts xi. 20. appeareth to me to be wholly groundlesse. Because I take the reading, there, to be, not *ἐλληνιστᾶς*, *bellenists*, *græcists*; but *Ἕλληνας*, *greeks*, or *uncircumcised gentiles*; according to the *Alexandrian* *manuscript*, and the *vulgar*, *syriac*, *arabic*, and *æthiopic* *versions*; and even according to the series of the *history* itself°. But,

(5. and lastly,) What putteth it out of all doubt, with me, that those *bellenists* were not all of them *profelytes* of *righteousnesse*, is St. LUKE's observation, [ver. 5.] that *Nicolas* was a *profelyte*, of *Antioch*. Possibly, it may be hence inferred, that some of the *bellenists* were *profelytes* of *righteousnesse*. But, as he alone, of all the *seven deacons*, is said to have been a *profelyte*, it is very unlikely, that all the *bellenists* were such. For, it is highly probable that others, of the *seven deacons*, were *bellenists*, as well as *Nicolas*. Whereas; by saying, that *Nicolas* was a *profelyte*, St. LUKE seemeth to have intimated, that

° See on Acts xi. 20.

that all the other *six deacons* were *jews*, by birth, as well as *religion*; though some of them might be *hellenists*; and others, *hebrews*.

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While *Satan's kingdom* fell before the preaching of the *gospel*, swiftly, like lightening from heaven; and the number of *the christians* increased exceedingly; the *hellenists* (or *græciseing, jewish christians*,) complained of the *hebrew christians*; because, in the daily distribution of the charity, their widows, who were poor, or sick, or burthened with the care of children, were either wholly neglected; or, at least, not made equal with the widows of the *hebrews*. It is highly probable, they esteemed the widows of the *græcists*, less worthy, and honorable. And, perhaps, no land had been sold, out of *Palæstine*, to raise, or support the fund, but what *Barnabas*, had sold, in the island *Cyprus*. And, therefore, they might think, that the *hellenists* had not an equal claim; as the *hebrews* had been the chief contributors.

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Acts vi.
1.

Upon this occasion, *deacons* were first chosen, in the *christian church*. Which office consisted, in *serving tables, or takeing care of the poor, out of the common bank of the church's charity*. Though those first *deacons*, (who had learned the *christian doctrine*, from the *APOSTLES*; and had, themselves, *extraordinary gifts and powers*,) did, also, assist the *APOSTLES*, in planting and watering the *christian religion*, in the world. And, indeed, any person, who understandeth, and is willing to teach, *christianity*, may, still, do it. But, the *diaconate* itself consisted onely in serving tables. The seven, who were now chosen, were, probably, of the number of the hundred and twenty; upon whom *the holy spirit* had fallen, immediately, from heaven. For, they are said to have been, already, *full of the holy spirit*. [ver. 5.] They, therefore, might (possibly) have some *gifts*, (as well as sagacity and prudence of their own,) which might more peculiarly qualifie them to discharge that office, with wisdom, propriety, and succeſſe. The *APOSTLES* had, hitherto, had the care of this distribution; as far as their *preaching, working miracles, bringing in new converts, and confirming the old*, would permit them. And it doeth not appear, that any *deacons* would have been appointed; had not the contention, between the *hebrews* and *hellenists*, occasioned it. And, indeed, after these seven were appointed, I do, by no means, look upon them, as the fixed and stated *deacons* of the *church*, at *Jerusalem*; but onely as *extraordinary officers*; appointed to take care of the management of the charitable fund, as long as that great body of *christians* kept together,

An. Christi ther, at *Jerusalem*. Where they continued, I suppose, for some time, to learn the *scheme of christianity*, from the APOSTLES, for their own instruction; and, perhaps, that they might, also, spread it, in their respective countries. These seven are never called *deacons*^p, in *scripture*; though *divines* have often called them so; nor did they always continue, at *Jerusalem*, to discharge that office, in that *church*; as *deacons*, who were some of the fixed *officers* of a particular *church*, were required to do; but are (some of them, at least,) represented, as leaving that service, and travelling to spread the *gospel*, in other places. And *Philip* seemeth to have fixed his residence at *Cæsarea*^q. — Though, therefore, the *deacons* of particular *churches* might be, in some measure, formed, according to this pattern; yet, they must have been a distinct sort, as to some circumstances; and, particularly, as to their residence, in one particular *church*.

As MOSES, the great *jewish law-giver*, when he was burthened with judging *Israel*, himself, did (upon the wise advice of *Jethro*, his father-in-law) choose, from among all *Israel*, such men, as feared GOD, men of truth, and who hated covetousness; to bear the burthen with him; to rule over the people, and to be judges, in smaller matters; that he might apply himself, more closely, to the more difficult cases, and more weighty affairs; so did the APOSTLES of OUR LORD, upon this disorder and complaint. For, when the number of *christians*, who resided, then, at *Jerusalem*, was exceedingly increased, so that they amounted to some thousands; and this disorder happened, unavoidably, through the multiplicity of affairs, which engaged the care and attention of the APOSTLES; they found themselves unable to attend to that, and their superior work, too; with the care and exactness, which the thing required. Assembling, therefore, the *christians*, (and, probably taking the *synagogue* for their model,) they proposed the matter, unto the multitude of the *disciples*, who are here the first time called, *brethren*. “Seeing it is “improper for us, APOSTLES, (said they) to leave the preaching of “the *gospel*, and take up our time, in serving tables; we would “have you look out, from among yourselves, seven men, full of “the *holy spirit*; persons of approved fidelity, and an established “reputa-

^p It must be owned, that *διακονία* is the word made use of, *ver. 1.* and *διακονεῖν*, *ver. 2.* But they are never called [*διακονοι*, *deacons*.] Though it is evident, [from *1 Tim. iii. 8*, &c. and *Phil. i. 1.*] that there were stated *officers*, in the *christian church*, of somewhat the like nature; who, afterwards, had the name of *deacons*.

^q Acts xxi. 8.

“reputation for wisdom; that, to them, we may safely commit
 “the management of this affair. But, as for our parts, seeing the
 “number of the *disciples* is so much increased, and such difficulties
 “happen; we find our selves incapable of manageing both. And,
 “therefore, we will devolve this inferior trust, upon others; and
 “we (as constituted the prime ministers in CHRIST’s *spiritual*
 “*kingdom*; and the onely persons, to whom CHRIST hath, by his
 “*spirit*, immediately reveled the whole scheme of the christian doctrine)
 “will give our selves up, wholly, to prayer; and to the teaching the
 “great and excellent doctrine of the gospel.” The proposel was
 highly pleaseing to the whole multitude of the *disciples*. And, pro-
 ceeding, immediately, to the election, they chose *Stephen* (who had
 the gift of faith, in an eminent degree; as well as several other
 of the gifts of the *spirit*) and *Philip*, and *Prochorus*, and *Nicanor*,
 and *Timon*, and *Parmenas*; and lastly, *Nicolas*, who had been

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Ver. 5. *Nicolas*.] The *sect* of the *Nicolaitans*, in the primitive church, are said to have taken their denomination, from this man. “Those were the *Continentes*, who placed their religion in abstinence from marriage; and abandoned their wives, if they had any.” Upon comparing the several accounts, I cannot but think that this *Nicolas* himself (if he was the head of that *sect*) was a much better man than his followers, and held better opinions; tho’ they were such as cannot, by any means, be vindicated. “As to himself, he is said to have had a beautiful wife; and that, the apostles taxing him with jealousy, he abandoned her; and permitted her to marry whom she pleased; saying, *That we must abuse the flesh*. And thenceforward, he (and his children also) lived a single life, in continence.” [Vid. *Clem. Alex. Strom.* 3. laudat. ab *Euseb. Hist. E.* l. 3. c. 29.]

This was, indeed, an excessive and outrageous zeal, in him and his family; and an enthusiasm in morality, which neither reason nor christianity requires of us. But his followers are said to have perverted his words to a quite contrary meaning. For, whereas, *Nicolas* himself intended, that the flesh ought not to be indulged, but kept under, and mortified, and even denied all sensible pleasures. In consequence of that doctrine, he no longer cohabited with his wife: and his son and daughters always remained in perfect virginity.

But his followers interpreted his words, so, as if *Nicolas* had commanded every one, to abuse his flesh, with all manner of voluptuousness and lasciviousness. [Vid. *Vales. in Euseb. hist. eccles.* l. 3. c. 29.] They, therefore, not onely abstained from marriage, but most impudently gave themselves over to fornication; holding the lawfulness of a community of women; and doing such things, as it is a shame to mention. [Vid. *Iren.* l. 1. c. 27.] And, to this doeth exactly agree, the account, which St. JOHN hath given us, [Rev. ii. 6, 15.] when he, by an order from OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, commended the church of *Ephesus*, for hateing both the doctrine and the deeds, of the *Nicolaitans*; which CHRIST also hated. Those *Nicolaitans*, or *Continentes*, who, under a pretence of angelical and extraordinary purity, were many of them debauched, and leud persons, did, afterwards, imbrace the doctrine of *Eons*, and of *ghosts*, male and female; and were generally avoided and abhorred, by the christian church, till the fourth century. But then, their doctrine came in, like a flood; and greatly

An. Christi ^{34.} a *profelyte of righteousness*; that is, a *jew*, by *religion*, though not
 Tiber. 20. by *birth*; and he was also a native of *Antioch*, in *Syria*. It is high-
 ly probable, that some of the seven, at least, were *græcists*. For
 Book I. they had *græcian* names. And the last is expressly said to have
 Chap. III. been a *profelyte of righteousness*, from *Antioch*, in *Syria*; where
 Sect. VI. the *greek* language was much in use. The reason of the thing,
 Acts vi. 5, also, may teach us as much. For, as it was, upon a complaint
 &c. of the *græcists*, that the *seven* were chosen, it was proper, that they
 should have a proportionable number chosen, out of their own
 body; that *their widows* might be, no longer, neglected, in the dai-
 ly distribution of the charitable allowance.

When the multitude had made choice of these seven, they pre-
 sented them, to the APOSTLES; who recommended them, to
 GOD, for his blessing, by *prayer*, accompanied with *the laying on*
of their hands. But there was no occasion, for the APOSTLES,
 to impart, unto them, any more *spiritual gifts*; because they were,
 before that, *full of the holy spirit*. Thus qualified, and commissi-
 oned, they took care of that branch of the public affairs. They
 could give, to every one, what the case required; and prevent any,
 from robbing the *church* of it's treasure; or fraudulently growing
 rich, thereby; as *Ananias* and *Sapphira* thought to have done.
 When the *fund* was managed, with such wisdom, fidelity, and
 vigilance, poor and sloathful *hypocrites* would be afraid of intrude-
 ing, for the sake of a maintenance. And, in that tender infancy
 of the *church*, it was highly requisite, upon many accounts, to
 commit it's weighty affairs, to men of such great prudence and
 strict integrity.

The body of the *christians* being thus made easie, again; and
 the APOSTLES now haveing more leisure, for attending their main
 work; *the christian doctrine* spread apace, and the number of *con-*
verts in *Jerusalem* still increased: Among which conversions, it was
 remarkable, that a great number, even of the *priests*, and *levites*,
 imbraced *the christian religion*.

greatly prevailed, by means of the mad, phanatical, fondness for coelibacy, and mon-
 kery, which was excedeing hateful to our blessed LORD, as he himself declares. [Rev.
 ii. 6; 15.] This made way apace for the *grand apostasy*. [See Sir Isaac Newton
 on the *prophecies*, p. 197, &c. and Mr. Thomas Moore, on the *first vision of St.*
John, p. 28, &c.]

Ver. 7. : Vide Mill. in loc.

CHAP. III. SECT. VII.

An. Christi

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Tiber. 20.

Book I.

Chap. III.

Sect. VII.

Acts vi.

8, &c.

St. Stephen's zeale raiseth him fierce and cruel enemies; who suborned witnesses against him. His speech, before the sanhedrim. The zealeots put him to death; devout men bury him. Acts vi. 8,—viii. 2.

ABOVE the rest of the seven *deacons*, St. Stephen was one of eminent and distinguished zeale and fortitude. He abounded with the *gifts* of the *holy spirit*^a, and *miraculous powers*; which he would not suffer to lie idle, or unimproved. For, to promote *christianity*, he performed great wonders, and worked many and incontestable *miracles*, openly, and before great multitudes of people; as well as publicly preached the *christian doctrine*.

There was a great number of *synagogues*, in *Jerusalem*; not onely for the natives, but for the *jews* of the different dispersions. And, upon this swift progresse of *christianity*, in that large city, some of the *jews* of the foreign *synagogues*, particularly the *libertines*; (that is, such *jews*, and *profelytes of righteousness*, as had been *roman slaves*, and had obtained their freedom; or the descendents of such freed-men^b;) the *Cyrenæans*, the *Alexandrians*, and such as came from *Cilicia*; (among whom, perhaps, *Saul* was one) and such as came from *Asia minor*; entered into debate, with St. Stephen, about religious matters: and, as we may reasonably suppose, more especially about those points, in which they apprehended the *christians* to contradict the *jews*; and by which, they thought, they subverted their *antient religion*. But they were unable to manage the dispute, with one, who had such extraordinary *gifts*; and who spoke with such clear and convinceing evidence. And, when they were baffled, in the dispute; and yet resolved not to yield to his arguments; they betook themselves to

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their

Ver. 8. ^a For [full of faith and of power,] many manuscripts, and versions, of great authority, read *πλήρης χάριτος*, full of grace, and of power. [Vid. Mill. in loc.]

Ver. 9. ^b See Dr. Lardner's credibility, &c. part 1. book 1. chap. 3. § 4. and Wolfius in loc. Others are for reading *Λιβυστίνων* that is, *Lybystines*, or men of *Lybia*. That would do very well: for *Lybia* joined to *Cyrene*. And, tho' there is no antient ms. version, nor father, to support that reading; yet some learned men have contended for it. [Vid. Wetsten. in loc.]

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their old method, of persecution. St. Stephen had, probably, hinted something of OUR SAVIOR'S *prophecie*, concerning the destruction of *Jerusalem*; and, particularly of that famous structure, the *temple*, which they so much idolized; and declared, that the most acceptable way of worshiping GOD, was *to worship him*, according to the *christian* rule, *in spirit and in truth*. But it was more than the APOSTLES themselves, as yet, clearly and fully understood, that the *ceremonial law* was to be abolished; and that the rites and customs should be changed, which *Moses*, their great law-giver, had delivered unto them. It is, therefore, very unlikely, that St. Stephen, who was inferior to the APOSTLES, should have so great and distinguishing a *revelation*, so early made unto him. But, whatsoever he might say, of the destruction of the city and temple, and of the excellence of *worshiping* GOD, *in spirit and truth*; he, certainly, expressed himself, with all due veneration, both towards the GREAT GOD; and towards *Moses*, the *jewish law-giver*. However; as *christianity* still spread, so very much; though the *sanbedrim* had first threatened two of the *leading* APOSTLES, and had afterwards imprisoned and scourged all the twelve; they were resolved, if possible, to put a stop to it's progress; and, at all adventures, to make an example of some of it's most distinguished votaries. They were afraid, that the people, in general, should be turned away, from them; and follow the APOSTLES; whereby they should lose all their credit and authority: Or that the *romans* should call them to an account, for the murder of so remarkable, and so innocent, a person, as JESUS. But, above all, they were greatly provoked to hear persons, whom they looked upon, as so much their inferiors, so frequently, and so publicly, charging them, with the murder of him, whom GOD had sent, as the great and long-expected *messiah*. When, therefore, they had, in vane, tried to stop the progress of *christianity*, by severe threatenings, imprisonments, and scourgings, they suborned witnesses; who laid, to St. Stephen's charge, the uttering railing speeches, and reproachful expressions, against the GREAT GOD, and against his servant *Moses*, their celebrated law-giver;—persons, whom, of all others, the *jews* had in the highest veneration! Such a charge, against one, who was, himself, of the *jewish nation*, put the people in a commotion; together with the *elders*, the chief men of the state; and the *scribes*, their learned *doctors* and *rabbies*. Upon which, in a sudden and violent manner, they apprehended him, and hurried him before the *sanbedrim*; whose

whose minds they seem to have known, very well; and who were (very probably) apprized of the design, if not the chief contrivers of it. And, along with St. Stephen, they presented the *false witnesses*; who affirmed, that *that man* (pointing to St. Stephen) was always uttering blasphemous and reproachful words, against that holy place, [the *temple*]; and against the *law of Moses*. "For we our selves (said they) have heard him affirm, that JESUS, the Nazarene, that contemptible master of his, will destroy this *sacred place*; and change the rites and institutions, delivered unto us, by *Moses*."

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St. Stephen stood up, to make his defence. And all the court, looking stedfastly upon him, observed an extraordinary brightnesse, upon his face; resembling that of *Moses*, when he came down from conversing with GOD, on mount *Sinai*; — even that *Moses*, in whom they gloried, and against whom they had falsely accused St. Stephen to have spoken: — or as if it had been the face of an angel.

But what avail signs and wonders, among the obdurate and incorrigible? For, notwithstanding the goodnesse of his cause; the *miracles*, which had been worked, to support it; and the lustre, with which he now appeared; no sooner had the *false witnesses* given in their evidence, and laid such grievous crimes to his charge, but *the high-priest*, as the mouth and præsidet of the court, asked him: "Have you heard what is laid to your charge? Are you guilty, or not guilty?"

To which, St. Stephen answered, in a long, noble, and affectionate, speech, to the following purpose.

St. STEPHEN'S SPEECH.

"My brethren, and fathers:

"If you will permit me, without interruption, I will tell you, with all faithfulness and sincerity, what I have said. And (by giving you a brief summary of past *dispensations*, from *Abraham*, to this day) the charge, which hath been alleged against me, will appear to be groundlesse, among all reasonable and unprejudiced persons. For I own and acknowledge the same GOD with you; and have as great a veneration, as you can possibly entertain, for all the *revelations* of his mind and will, which were made to our *fathers*, by *Moses*, and the succeeding *prophets*.
"And,

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2, &c.

“ And, (1.) As to changeing of positive rites and institutions;
“ and paying acceptable worship, in one place, as well as another;
“ I have this to allege: *That, in different ages and circumstances,*
“ *positive and external rites have been different; and holinesse was*
“ *not originally confined to one particular place.* For, when a great
“ part of the world was over-run with *idolatry*; even *Terah's* fa-
“ mily not quite free from it; and *Abraham*, himself, either an
“ *idolator*^c; or, at least, in danger of being infected, by that
“ spreading contagion; then *the true GOD* appeared, in the cloud
“ of glory, to that great ancestor of ours, while he was in *Ur* of
“ the *Chaldees*, which lieth in *Mesopotamia*, or between the *Tigris*
“ and *Euphrates*; that is, before he dwelt in *Charran*.^d And (that
“ the knowlege and worship of *the true GOD* might be preserved,
“ in *one family*, at least) the LORD said unto him, *Get thee out of*
“ *thy native country, and from among thine idolatrous kindred; and*
“ *go, into the land, which I will point out, to thee.* Upon which,
“ he departed, from *Chaldea*; and dwelt, for some time, in *Char-*
“ *ran*; his father *Terah* accompanying him thither. And,
“ after his father's death, he had a second order, from GOD,
“ to remove^e; and then he came into the land, which you
now

Ver. 2. ^c *Josh. xxiv. 2.* The fathers, who dwelt on the other side of *Euphrates*, are said to have worshiped *other gods*. And *Abraham's* father is particularly mentioned, as one of them. But, [*Rom. iv. 5.*] St. PAUL goeth farther, and calleth *Abraham*, τὸν ἀσεβῆ, an ungodly person, or an idolator. For that is the word, by which he usually intends to signifie an idolator.

^d Gen. xi. 31, 32. and xii. 1. and xv. 7. *Josh. xxiv. 2, 3.* *Nehem. ix. 7.*

Ver. 4. ^e Gen. xi. 31, 32. compared with chap. xii. 1; 5. It has been objected that St. Stephen's account, in this place, is inconsistent with what is said, Gen. xi. 26; 32. For, as *Terah* was but 70 years old, when *Abraham* was borne; and *Abraham* but 75, when he departed from *Charran*; these make up no more than 145 years. But *Terah* lived to be 205. and so must have lived, 60 years, after *Abraham* left *Charran*. Whereas; St. Stephen affirms, that *Abraham* did not go from *Charran*, 'till after his father died.' ANSWER. I would passe over the indecent reflections, which some have made, upon this speech of St. Stephen's; and the forced solutions, which others have given, of this difficulty: and would offer two solutions; either of which will remove the difficulty. The one, is, that, according to the Samaritane copy, *Terah* lived onely 145 years, and then died in *Charran*. [See the Polyglott on Gen. xi. 32.] The other, is, that *Abraham* was not *Terah's* eldest, but his youngest, son; tho' by way of honor and distinction, *Moses* has mentioned him, the first of the three; as being the great patriarch of the *jewish* nation. Gen. xi. 26, 27.] In like manner, *Shem* is mentioned the first of the sons of *Noah*, [Gen. v. 32. and vi. 10. and vii. 13. and ix. 18. and x. 1. tho' *Japheth* was *Noah's* eldest son. [See *Abp Usher's annals*, in the year of the world, 1556; 1558.] For *Haran* was *Terah's* eldest son, who died in *Ur* of the *chaldees*, his native country; and who left a daughter, called *Milcah*, old enough to be married to her uncle *Nabor*, her father's brother

“ now inhabit.^f (In all which places, he was equally acceptable to
 “ GOD, if equally holy. And, therefore, holiness, and acceptance
 “ with GOD, do not depend upon families, times, and places.) But
 “ GOD gave him, not one foot of this land of promise, into present
 “ possession. For, even there, he bought a burying-place, to bury
 “ his dead out of his sight.^g Yet GOD promised the land, as an
 “ inheritance, unto him ; and that it should be possessed, by his
 “ seed, after him ; though then he had no son.^h But GOD pro-
 “ mised him, also, a son ; and, from him, a numerous issue ;
 “ and foretold that his seed should sojourn, as strangers, in a
 “ strange land,ⁱ where they should be brought into a long and
 “ cruel bondage : And that their wandering about, as strangers ;
 “ and their being under that heavy oppression, should be for about
 “ four hundred years ; that is, including their primitive unsettled
 “ state, in Canaan ; their evil treatment, from the birth of Isaac, who
 “ was

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4. &c.

brother. When, therefore, Terah was 70 years of age, then was Haran borne, being his eldest son. Nahor, his 2d son, was borne, some years after. And Abraham, his youngest son, was borne, 60 years after his brother Haran ; and when his father, Terah, was 130 years of age. Now 75, added to 130, makes up 205 ; the age, at which Terah died, in the land of Charran. [See Abp Usher's annals, anno mundi, 1948, &c. See, also, Wolfius, Dr. Doddridge, and Wetstein, on this place. Ludovici Capelli critic. sacr. l. 3. c. 20. § 12. p. 209. Dr. Lightfoot's works, vol. 2. p. 666.]

^f Probably Canaan was, then, not so universally given to idolatry, as Chaldaea. For there, Abraham met with Melchisedec, who was a worshiper of the true GOD. And, as he was a king, very likely his subjects were not idolaters. But, in Chaldaea, idolatry must have had a large spread, when Terah's family was infected. And, therefore, the calling Abraham, into Canaan, at that time, was a likely mean to keep him from idolatry : as it removed him, from his kindred, who would have been apt to have tempted him, more than strangers ; and as he was directed to a land, where idolatry had not then spread so much. Nay ; yet farther to deter Abraham, GOD intimated to him, that, in some future generations, that very land of Canaan should become notorious for idolatry ; and then GOD would take it, from the inhabitants ; and bestow it upon his seed.

^g Gen. xxiii. 3,—16.

^h Gen. xii. 7. and xiii. 14, &c.

Ver. 6. ⁱ Gen. xv. 13. Some think, that this is said, in opposition to their sojourn, as strangers, in the land of Canaan, [Heb. xi. 9.] which was not a strange land ; but theirs, by divine promise. But GOD, himself, teaches us, otherwise, Exod. vi. 4. where he calls Canaan the land of their pilgrimage, wherein they [that is, Abraham and his descendents] had hitherto been strangers. For they were not, as yet, possessed of it, tho' they had a good title to it. [See, also, Gen. xii. 10. and xvii. 8. and xxvi. 3. and xxxv. 27. Ps. cv. 11. 12.] This is proper to be taken notice of, in order to explaine what immediately follows. [See Wolfius, Dr. Hammond, Dr. Whitby, and Dr. Doddridge, in loc. Bp Patrick on Gen. xv. 13. Ludovic. Cappell. Critic. sacr. p. 210 ; 281.]

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“ was the first of them, and heir of the promise ; and their long
 “ bondage and slavery in *Ægypt*. [And from the cruel treat-
 “ ment of righteous *Abraham*'s more immediate descendents, you
 “ may observe, *that temporal prosperity, and the favor of the mul-
 titude, are not always the lot of the people of GOD.*]
 “ But, besides the *prophecies*, concerning their afflictions, GOD,
 “ likewise, assured *Abraham*, that the *nation*, which would so much
 “ oppress them, should, at last, fall under great and remarkable
 “ divine judgments ; and that then, his seed (in about four gene-
 “ rations, from their going down, into *Ægypt*) should come out,
 “ from thence ; and serve him, [*the true GOD,*] in this promised
 “ land of *Palæstine*.^k In confirmation of all which prædictions,
 “ and promises, GOD gave, unto *Abraham*, the positive rite of *circum-
 cision* ; as a seal and token of the truth of what he had declared.
 “ And, accordingly, afterwards, when *Isaac* (*the son of the promise*)
 “ was borne, he also was circumcised, the eighth day from his
 “ birth.

“ But, our great progenitor, *Abraham*, was in the favor of GOD, be-
 “ fore *circumcision* was instituted. Whence it plainly appeareth,
 “ *that the divine favor is not confined, through all ages, to the ob-
 servation of any one sort of positive institutions.*¹

“ From *Abraham*, the promised blessing descended, to *Isaac* ;
 “ from *Isaac*, to *Jacob* ; and, from *Jacob*, to the twelve *patriarchs*,
 “ the heads and fathers of the twelve tribes of *Israel*. And the
 “ *prophecie*, concerning the oppression of our *fathers*, in a strange
 “ land, was thus accomplished. The other *patriarchs*, envying
 “ their brother, *Joseph*, (for the prædictions, which GOD had dis-
 “ covered,

Ver. 7. ^k Gen. xv. 14. ; 16. Exod. xii. 40, 41.

Ver. 8. ¹ If St. *Stephen* had denied the charge ; as there were two witnesses, who
 swore against him, he had been condemned, immediately. If he had owned the
 charge ; he would, likewise, thereupon, have fallen under *immediate condemnation*.
 If he had gone about directly to have defended the truth of what the witnesses had
 alleged, against him, the *sanhedrim* would not have had the patience to have heard
 him. As it was, he proceeded the onely possible way to be heard, so long, as 'till he
 had vindicated himself ; *that is*, by laying down the premises ; and leaving them to
 draw the proper inferences, from what he said. Just as OUR LORD, in like cases,
 and for the very same reason, had often spoken in *parables*.

I have, indeed, all along, drawn the *inferences*, which follow from St. *Stephen*'s
 premises, and assertions ; and which he seemeth plainly to have pointed at. But, if he
 himself had attempted to have mentioned them, before that incensed audience ; they
 would presently have interrupted him, and suffered him to go no farther : as they
 actually did, when he came to draw the general conclusion, from all that he had
 said.

" covered, to him, in dreams, concerning his future grandeur,) An. Christi
 " sold him, to some *Midianites* ; who carried him, into *Ægypt*, and 34.
 " sold him, there, for a slave. [From which instance, you may learn Tiber. 20.
 " to abate your hard thoughts of *JESUS* of *Nazareth* ; whom you, in Book I.
 " like manner, through envy, delivered into the hands of strangers, Chap. III.
 " who dealt cruelly with him. And, farther, from the treatment, Sect. VII.
 " which virtuous *Joseph* met with, you may see, how holy and good Acts vii.
 " men may be treated, in a cruel and unjust manner, by men ; and, at 9, &c.
 " the same time, be highly in the favor of *GOD*. And, therefore,
 " it behoveth you, in the present case, to examine carefully, and
 " to judge with candor. And, finally, I would have you learn,
 " that holiness, and acceptance with *GOD*, are not confined to any one
 " particular country. For] *GOD* showed favor to *Joseph*, in *Ægypt*,
 " amidst an idolatrous and wicked people ; delivering him, out
 " of all his afflictions ; and enduing him, with such wisdom and
 " excellent qualifications, that *Pharaoh*, king of *Ægypt*, preferred
 " him, to the highest place, in his kingdom, next to himself.^m
 " And *GOD* hath, yet more eminently, distinguished *JESUS* of
 " *Nazareth* ; whom you crucified ; by raising him from the dead,
 " exalting him to his own right hand, and committing unto him,
 " all power, both in heaven and upon earth.ⁿ After *Joseph's* ex-
 " altation, a famine happened, in *Canaan* ; which occasioned our
 " fathers, *Joseph's* brethren, to go into *Ægypt*, to buy provisions ;
 " first without *Benjamin*, their youngest brother ; and, a second time,
 " with him. Then *Joseph* discovered himself to them, and ac-
 " quainted *Pharaoh* with their coming. And then, he also sent
 " for his father *Jacob*, and all his nearest kindred ; who (besides
 " *Jacob*, if we include the eleven wives of his sons) amounted to
 " seventy-five persons.^o So *Jacob* went down into *Ægypt*, and
 " died ; as did also his sons, the twelve patriarchs. But their bo-
 " dies were removed from thence^p ; and *Jacob* was buried in
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Ver. 10. ^m Gen. xli. 39, 40. and xlv. 8. and l. 20.

ⁿ Acts iii. 17, 18. Matt. xxviii. 18.

Ver. 14. ^o See Dr. *Whitby*, *Wolffius*, *Poole's synopsis*. and Dr. *Doddridge*, on this place.

Ver. 16. ^p It is not improbable, but that the bones of the other eleven patriarchs might be carried, along with the bones of *Joseph*, when the children of *Israel* went out of *Ægypt* ; [Exod. xiii. 19.] and be afterwards buried, along with his bones, when *Israel* came into *Canaan*. There was the same reason, for them, to desire to be buried there, as there was for *Joseph* ; that is, their firm belief, that *GOD* would, in due time, fulfil his promise, in giving *Canaan*, unto *Israel*, for a possession. [Gen. l. 25.]

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“ the cave of *Machpelah*, which *Abraham* had bought, of *Ephron*,
 “ the *Hittite*; and where both *Abraham* and *Isaac* had been bu-
 “ ried, before him.^a But the bodies of the twelve *patriarchs* were
 “ carried over, into *Sichem*, and buried there; in the sepulchre, which
 “ *Jacob*, the descendent of *Abraham*, bought of the sons of *Emmor*,
 “ the father of *Sichem*.^r

“ And,

l. 25. *Heb.* xi. 22.] And, accordingly, some of the *antient jews* affirm, that the bodies of the *patriarchs* were carried, and buried along with *Joseph*. [See *Dr. Lightfoot on this place*, vol. 1. p. 781, 782. and vol. 2. p. 668.] And *Jerome*, also, [in *epitaphio Paulæ*] asserteth, that the twelve *patriarchs* were buried at *Sichem*. [See *Mr. Wetstein in loc.*]

^a *Gen.* xlvii. 30, 31. and xlix. 28,—31. and l. 13.

^r This is a text, upon which *critics* and *commentators* have exercised their skill, for some ages. All, that I can do, will be to offer something to alleviate the difficulty; or show how the alteration might possibly happen. For, I think it evident, that there hath been some alteration, made, from the *original reading*; as this account does, at present differ from that of the *old testament*.

In the first place, *καὶ μετετέθοντο εἰς Συχὲμ* [and were carried over into *Sichem*] must be referred to [our fathers,] the nearest antecedent, or nominative case. And, then, it will agree with what hath been observed, from *Jerome*, and some of the *antient jews*. (2.) Without a great many *ellipses*, there can be nothing fairly deduced from this text, concerning the burial of *Jacob*. Though I have inserted an account of it, from the *old testament*. [*Gen.* xlix. 30, 31, and l. 13.] (3.) The main difficulty, is, to shew how *Abraham* came to be mentioned, here. For *Abraham* bought the burying-place, (where he himself, and *Isaac*, and *Jacob*, were buried,) of *Ephron* the *Hittite*. [*Gen.* xxiii. 7, &c. and xlix. 30.] Whereas; *Jacob* bought a parcel of ground, of the sons of *Emmor*, the father of *Sichem*. [*Gen.* xxxiii. 18, 19.] And there, *Joseph* was buried: [*Josh.* xxiv. 32.] and probably, all the other eleven *patriarchs* along with him; as hath been hinted already.

To reconcile *St. Stephen's* speech therefore, with the *old testament-history*, we must either, (1.) Suppose, that *Abraham* was here designed for the *genitive case*, as it is *Matt.* i. 1. and that the word, [*υἱὸς* or *ἐκγονός*, the son or descendent,] is here understood, and ought to be supplied. And, then, the words would run thus; [In the sepulchre, which the son, or descendent, of *Abraham* bought, for a sum of money, of the sons of *Emmor*, the father of *Sichem*.] To confirm this, it may be observed, that *Ἀβελ* [*Abel*] must be looked upon, as a *genitive case*, [*Heb.* xii. 24.] though *τῷ*, the article, is not there præfixed. However; I confesse, that *τὸ*, or *τὸν*, doeth there præcede the word, *Abel*. Whereas; neither *ὁ*, nor *τῷ*, is here præfixed to the word, *Abraham*.

That *father*, *mother*, *brother*, or *son*, are often left to be supplied, by the reader, will easily appear, from the following texts. *Εμμορ τῷ Συχὲμ* is, in this very verse, put for *Emmor*, the father of *Sichem*. For, [*Gen.* xxxiii. 19. and *Josh.* xxiv. 32.] *Emmor* is asserted to have been the father of *Sichem*. [*Luke* xxiv. 10. *Mark.* xv. 40.] *Μαρία Ἰακώβου*, is put for *Mary*, the mother of *James*, [*Matt.* x. 2, 3.] *Ἰάκωβος ὁ τῷ Ζεβεδαίου* signifieth *James*, the son of *Zebedee*; and *Ἰάκωβος ὁ τῷ Ἀλφαίου* *James*, the son of *Alphæus*. [See, also, *Mark* ii. 14. *Luke* vi. 16.] And, [*Acts* i. 13. compared with *Jude*, ver. 1.] *Ἰούδας Ἰακώβου*, signifieth *Judas*, the brother of *James*. As this was so usual a way of speaking, among the *jews*; why might not *St. Stephen* procede, by

" And, when the time drew nigh; the time, appointed, for the
 " accomplishment of that solemn promise, which GOD had, by
 " oath, confirmed unto *Abraham*; the people of *Israel* multiplied
 " exceedingly, and grew very numerous, in *Ægypt*. And, as *Jo-*
 " *seph* had been dead, two or three generations ago; and the king-
 " dom of *Ægypt* transferred, to another family; they had forgot
 " his kind offices, to their nation; and began to envy our kindred,
 " and to treat them cruelly and insidiously; makeing their lives a
 " burthen, through slavery and bondage; and useing them, in the
 " most severe and tyrannical manner. Nay; the *Ægyptians*
 " thought, even to have destroyed them, from being any longer a
 " people, by ordering their male children to be murthered, at their
 " birth; or causeing them, afterwards, to be exposed. In which
 " perilous time, *Moses* was borne; who was, indeed, a divinely
 " beautiful

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by giving them the most brief hints of a fact, with which they, all, were so well acquainted; and do it, by such an *ellipsis*, as they could easily supply? Especially, as it signified nothing, to the main argument, whether *Abraham* or *Jacob*, had bought the sepulchre? But,

2. *Bochart* hath proposed another way, of solving the difficulty; which would have done much better, than the last, if there had been any antient *manuscript*, *version*, or *father*, to countenance and support it. He supposeth, that the word, *Abraham*, was first put in the margin, by some busie *transcriber*, or *reader*, of the new testament; who thought the verb, *ἐνίστατο* wanted a *nominative case* to it:—that *Abraham* was the person designed; — and that this word, by degrees, crept into the *text*, and gradually prevailed to be the common reading. [*Vid. Hieroz. l. 2. c. 47.*] *Knatchbul* has another solution, which does not appear to me so easie and natural.

Le Clerc [*in art. critic. part. 3. sect. 1. c. 12. § 4.*] imagines " that IAB was writ, by way of contraction, for IAKΩB, that possibly the I might be writ imperfectly; or, through length of time, rubbed quite out; and that the transcriber took it, for the beginning of the word, *Abraham*. So IHA used to be writ for ΙΣΡΑΗΛ, IAHM for ΙΕΡΟΣΑΛΗΜ, and ΔΑΔ for ΔΑΥΙΔ." But *Wolffius* has very justly observed, that the contractions are not of such antiquity, as that such a mistake should thereby creep into the most antient copies. And that, if one transcriber had made such a mistake, it is a wonder that all the antient mss. *versions* and *fathers* should follow him.

If it be considered, how antient the books of the old and new testament are; and how often they have been transcribed; it will not be wondered that some difficulties should arise, from the mistakes of *transcribers*. Though there are very few, or none, but what may easily be rectified, in matters of moment. As to this, which is a fact, upon which neither our *faith* nor *practice*, no, nor even St. *Stephen's* defence of himself and his doctrine, doeth at all depend; it is visible, that the difficulty might happen, either of the two ways above mentioned; that is, either by a curt way of speaking, or by a *transcriber's* adding the word [*Abraham*.] And, therefore, it may be rectified, by either of these two easie and probable conjectures. So that no argument can hence be fairly alleged, against St. *Stephen's* vindication and apology; and much lesse against the *christian revelation*.

Ver. 19. ⁴ *Joseph. Antiq. l. 2. c. 9. § 1.*

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“ beautiful and ingageing child.^t And, therefore, his parents
 “ concealed him, for three months. But when they could con-
 “ ceal him, no longer ; and he was exposed, in the river *Nile* ;
 “ by a good providence, *Pharaoh's* daughter happened to come by,
 “ that way ; and pitying the poor, helpless, infant, she took him
 “ up ; and adopted him, for her own son. By that mean, *Moses*
 “ had a most liberal education ; being instructed in all the learning
 “ of the *Ægyptians* ; which was, then, one of the most learned
 “ nations, upon earth. And (though he could not speak fluently)
 “ he became mighty and powerful, both in word and deed ; *that is*,
 “ his speeches were solid and wise ; and his actions virtuous, honest,
 “ and brave.— This instrument of divine providence, thus remark-
 “ ably preserved, and qualified for the great work ; haveing been in-
 “ structed in the knowlege of his being an *Israelite*, by extraction ;
 “ and acquainted with the principles of the religion of his renowned
 “ ancestors ; he had his heart touched with the calamities of his
 “ brethren, the children of *Israel* ; and was much more intent,
 “ upon their deliverance ; than upon all the riches, and splendor,
 “ of the *Ægyptian court*. And, when he was full forty years old,
 “ he was willing to show his own kindred, how ready he would
 “ be, to assist them ; when the time should come, in which GOD
 “ had promised to work out their deliverance. And, being so
 “ much grieved, and so sensibly affected, with their calamity, he
 “ left *Pharaoh's* court ; and went to visit the afflicted *Israelites*, as
 “ they were drudging at the brick-kilns. And, there, he happened
 “ to see an *Ægyptian*, who had subdued an *Israelite* ; and seemed
 “ plainly resolved to take away his life.” Upon which, *Moses*
 could

Ver. 20. ^t Justin. Histor. l. 36. c. 2. Joseph. Antiq. l. 2. c. 9. §. 6. *Exod.* ii. 2.
 See note ^u I Thess. ii. 18.

Ver. 24. ^u *Exod.* ii. 11. The word is מַכֵּה [Macceh,] which sometimes signifieth,
 [to smite, so as to kill.] And the *Israelite* is, here, represented, as κατὰ πόνον μένον, subdued in
 a struggle ; and in immediate danger of his life. So that *Moses* had no occasion for
 a divine impulse, in order to his doing this action. For ; (not to mention, that then
 GOD would, most probably, have supported him, afterwards ; and he needed not to
 have fled for it ;) as the *Ægyptian* had got the *Israelite* down ; and was, as appeared
 by all circumstances, just going to kill him ; *Moses* onely defended the injured, and
 vindicated the innocent, when oppressed. A thing, which any person may lawfully
 do, at any time, or in any place, to a stranger ; and much more to his own friend.
 Nay ; the thing was, in itself, so far from a crime ; that it was highly laudable and
 praise-worthy ; and what *Moses* would, with great reason, have done, to the *Israelite*,
 if he had been going, as unjustly, to kill the *Ægyptian*.

It is true, that justice could not be then had, in the *Ægyptian* court, in behalf of
 the *Israelites*. And, therefore, some may think, it was, in those circumstances, im-
 prudent.

" could refrain no longer. But ran to rescue the innocent person. An. Christi
 " And, in defending him, he happened to slay the *Ægyptian*. By 34.
 " which vigorous attempt, in their favor, w he, in a most evident Tiber. 20.
 " and affectionate manner, discovered his readinesse to deliver Book I.
 " them; when the time appointed should come, And he sup- Chap. III.
 " posed that, by such zealous and kind actions, he should make Sect. VII.
 " the *Israelites* understand, that he was the very person, whom Acts vii.
 " GOD had designed, for their captain and deliverer. But (though 24, &c.
 " I have the greatest veneration, for this *our excellent law-giver*; yet)
 " so stupid were they, that they understood not.— That he might
 " convince them of his concern for them, he appeared, among
 " them, again, the next day. And, then, he found two *Israelites*
 " quarrelling; whom he would gladly have reconciled; arguing
 " thus with them: *Why! you two are brethren; and have other ene-*
 " *mies enow. Why will you injure one another?* But he, who did
 " the wrong, spurned at him, and thus reproached him: *What*
 " *makes you so busie to interpose, as a ruler, or judge, over us? I know*
 " *your ways, better than you may imagine. Perhaps, you have*
 " *a design to kill me; as you did the Ægyptian, yesterday.* When
 " *Moses* found, that his slaying the *Ægyptian* was known; and that
 " even his own brethren reproached him, with it; though he ran
 " that hazard, in their just defence; he was afraid, it would come
 " to the ears of *Pharaoh*, and indanger his own life. He, there-
 " fore, fled into the land of *Midian*. Where (though he was a
 " stranger, at his first coming) he soon got acquaintance; and mar-
 " ried *Zipporah*, the daughter of *Jethro*, a very great man in that
 " countrey. And there *Moses* lived, 'till he had two sons. In all
 " which

prudent. But it must be remembered, that according to the *history*, [Exod. ii. 12.]
Moses used all proper precautions; and looked every way, to see, whether there was
 any *Ægyptian*, in sight; before he ventured to rescue his brother, from the hand of
 the oppressor, and from death. And, had not the *Israelites* themselves blabbed it; it
 is highly probable, *Pharaoh* would never have known it. So that it is easie to vindicate,
 both the justice, and prudence, of this action of *Moses*.

Ver. 25. w It doeth not appear, that *Moses* had, as yet, any *prophecie*, to assure
 him, that he was to be the person, who should deliver *Israel*. But, knowing that
 there was a divine promise of deliverance, made to, and retained in, the house of
Israel; — that he himself had been extraordinarily preserved, and educated; and that
 the time, of their deliverance, was approaching; he showed himself willing to run
 all hazards and dangers, with the people of GOD, rather than continue in the splendor
 of the *Ægyptian court*; and that, when the time should be fully come, he would
 cheerfully join, and head them, in order to rescue them, from their bondage, and
 cruel slavery.

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“ which time, he was blessed ; and as acceptable to GOD, as he
 “ would have been, in this land of *Canaan*.
 “ Forty years after his departure from *Ægypt*, as *Moses* was
 “ keeping the flock of *Jethro*, his father in law, (who was prince
 “ of *Midian* ;) and had, one day, drove the flock, to the back-side
 “ of the desert ; he came unto the mountain, called *Horeb*, or *Sinai*.
 “ And, there, *the angel of the LORD* appeared, unto him, in *the cloud*
 “ of *glory*, like a flame of fire, in the midst of a bush. And yet the
 “ bush was not consumed. At the first view, *Moses* wondered at
 “ the unusual sight. * But, going towards it, to observe it more
 “ narrowly, the voice of the LORD issued thence, saying, *I am the*
 “ *GOD of thy fathers*, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob ; *with whom I en-*
 “ *tered into covenant. And I will faithfully accomplish, all, that I*
 “ *have promised to them ; or to their seed, after them.* This unex-
 “ pected admonition struck a terror, upon *Moses*, and a trembling ;
 “ and made him afraid to look again. But the voice added : Put
 “ off thy shoes. For thou now standest upon holy ground. I remember
 “ thy concern for Israel. And I my self have assuredly seen,† and con-
 “ sidered, how the *Ægyptians* oppress them. The set time for their
 “ deliverance is approaching. For that reason, am I now come down.
 “ I have chosen thee to be their deliverer. And, for this purpose, I will
 “ send thee into *Ægypt*.—And (such was the difference between GOD’s
 “ judgment of things, and that of our fore-fathers ; that) the very
 “ person, whom they had rejected, with that scornful insult, *Who*
 “ *made thee a ruler, or a judge, over us ?* That very person, I say,
 “ did GOD send, as their leader and deliverer, under the guidance
 “ and protection of *the angel* ; who appeared unto him, in the
 “ burning bush. *Moses* first worked miracles in *Ægypt*, to con-
 “ firm his divine mission. And, then, lead all *Israel* out of *Ægypt*,
 “ and worked more miracles, at the red sea ; and in the wilderness,
 “ for forty years together. But, though he was a great prophet,
 “ our celebrated law giver, and the captain of salvation from the
 “ *Ægyptian* bondage ; (upon all which accounts, I greatly reverence
 “ him,

Ver. 31. * From *Moses* his surprize, it seemeth, that he had never seen the divine glory, before this.

Ver. 34. † Ἰδὼν ἑδού See, I have seen.] St. Stephen here follows the 70. which exactly answers to the heb. Exod. iii. 7. רָאֵה רָאֵה raah raithi. But this phraseology is not peculiar to the hebrews. It is used, also, in greek authors. Ἰδὼν ἑδού, [Lucian. dialog. 2. Menel. & Proteus, ad fin. See, also, Polybius and Arrian, as quoted by Raphaelius. Consult Wolfius ; and compare what is said, in a note on James v. 17.]

" him, and his law ;) yet he himself hath intimated, that we are not
 " to rest in his law ; but to look farther ; even unto the *messiah* ;
 " to whom I am now attempting to bring you. For, [Deut. xviii.
 " 15.] a prophet, (said Moses to Israel) will the LORD, YOUR GOD,
 " raise up, unto you, from among your brethren, like unto me ;
 " that is, one, who shall be a savior, and law-giver, or introduce
 " a new dispensation. Unto him you are obliged to attend.—
 " That MOSES, who thus prophesied, was the very person, who
 " was so emient, in the vast assembly of Israel ; and who con-
 " ducted that numerous, stubborn, people ; in their long and diffi-
 " cult march, through the wide wilderness ; who had the presence
 " of the angel of the LORD, in a cloud of glory, both for his de-
 " fence and direction. ² Which angel journeyed, from place to
 " place, with our fathers ; and with which, Moses, at mount Sinai,
 " familiarly conversed ; that is, face to face, as a man with his
 " friend. For he had the honor to receive the living oracles of
 " truth ; that he might impart them unto us. But, such was the
 " disposition of Israel of old, towards the person, whom GOD sent,
 " with a revelation of his mind and will ; that (notwithstanding all
 " his excellent qualifications ; and the clear evidences, which at-
 " tended his mission) our fathers were rebellious, and disobedient.
 " And, by the most unaccountable stupidity, and most amazeing
 " folly, they desired, rather to return to the slavery and idolatry of
 " Ægypt ; than be conducted, by him, to truth, virtue, and liberty.
 " And, so bent were they upon this egregious folly, that even with-
 " in forty days, after GOD had given them the law, from mount
 " Sinai, in so tremendous a manner, they desired Aaron to make
 " them idol-gods, to go before them, and guard them, back again,
 " into Ægypt. For, as to Moses, who had brought them out of
 " Ægypt, (because he tarried, some days, with GOD, in the mount,
 " to receive the model of their religion and polity) they pretended,
 " they could not tell what was become of him. ^a AARON was so
 " very

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Tiber. 20.

Book I.

Chap. III.

Sect. VII.

Acts vii.

37. &c.

* Ver. 38. ² Exod. xxiii. 23. and xxxii. 34. Numb. xx. 16.

Ver. 40. ^a ὁ γὰρ μωϋσῆς — ἐκ οὐδ' αὖτε γέγονεν αὐτῶν. As for this Moses, — we know not what is become of him.] This is the phraseology both of the 70. and of the heb. : Exod. xxxii. 1. This has been called putting the nominative case absolute. Accordingly, I would explaine, Dan. xii. 2. וְרַבִּים מִיָּשְׁנֵי אֲרָמָה-עָפָר &c. And, as to the multitude, who sleep in the dust of the earth, they shall awake ; some to everlasting life ; and some to shame and everlasting contempt. So Daniel's words would appear, to be a prophetic of the general resurrection of mankind. Which does not appear, in our common english translation. Many other texts might be explained, by ob-
serving

An. Christi 34. Tiber. 20. Book I. Chap. III. Sect. VI. Acts vi. 41, &c. “ very weak, as to comply with their request. And, as the *Ægyptians* represented their god, *Apis*, by an image, made like an ox, or a calf; so the *Israelites* thought to have represented the true GOD, by such an *image*; or hoped, that, to that visible representation, they might confine his more peculiar presence. Accordingly; *Aaron* made an *idol*, which bore the resemblance of a calf. And, before it, they immediately began to offer sacrifices; rejoicing, and dancing, before that *idol mediator*; or that symbol of the divine presence; which was the work of their own hands. [You, therefore, are not the first, who have rejected the laws, which came from GOD; but evidently approve yourselves the children of your wicked fore-fathers.]

“ The *Ægyptian* worship of *Osiris*, under the species of a golden bull; and of *Apis*, under the symbol of a living ox; are said to have been really the worship of the sun and moon, the most glorious of all the host of heaven. ^b As, therefore, your fathers, the *Israelites*, of old, were so bent upon imitating the idolatry of *Ægypt*, and other neighboring nations; the mind of GOD was averse to them; and he turned their sin into their punishment; suffering them to proceed, from the worship of him, by images, to worship the host of heaven themselves; that is, the creature, instead of the creator. ^c And thus they stand reprov'd, by the *antient prophet*; [Amos v. 25, 26, 27.] O ye house of Israel, can you think, that your sacrificing slain beasts to me, for the forty years, in which I miraculously provided for you, in the wilderness, could be acceptable? Or can you suppose, that I was ignorant of your unwillingness to sacrifice unto me at all; when you willingly sacrificed to the golden calf, made by *Aaron*; and afterwards to *Baalpeor*. ^d You have,

serving, that they have used this phraseology. Both *Beza* and *Grotius* have represented it as an *hebraism*. But *Raphelius* hath shown, that it was made use of, by the best greek writers; such as *Herodotus* and *Xenophon*. Which is confirmed by *Wolffius in loc.*

Ver. 42. ^b Selden. de Diis Syriis, c. iv. Prideaux his connection, vol. 1. p. 170, 171. 4th edit. 8vo. 1718.

^c Rom. i. 21; 24. Psalm. lxxxvi. 11, 12. There were two sorts of idolatry; namely, the worshipping the true GOD, by idol-mediators; or terminateing their worship upon false gods. *Israel* began with the former. And, for a punishment, were permitted to fall into the latter.

Ver. 43. ^d There is no account, in the history of *Moses*, of the *Israelites* worshipping *Moloch*, or *Remphan*, in the wilderness. And here is evidently an end of the question, ver. 42. It seems, therefore, most likely that the prophet, *Amos*, proceeded to charge them with the idolatries, of which they were afterwards guilty; and for which the ten tribes were carried into a captivity, from whence they never returned, [See *Beza*, *Grotius*, and *Dr. Doddridge*.]

“ have, also, since that, carried about, the shrines, in which were
 “ placed the images of your god Moloch, (or the sun ;) and the star,
 “ which represented your god Chiun^e ; (Remphan, or saturn ;)
 “ which shrines, with their images placed in them, you used to carry
 “ about, in a pompous procession, at your festivals ; and before which
 “ you used to worship your idol-gods ? As a punishment for which
 “ idolatry, you shall be carried captive into Assyria, beyond Damas-
 “ cus, and even beyond Babylon.

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2. “ As

^e Compare, with this text, Jer. viii. 2. and xix. 13. He is called here *Remphan*. But he is called *Chiun*, Amos v. 26.

“ *Vul-kan*, I conjecture to have come from a transposition of the vowels of *בעל כיון*
 “ *Balkiun*, the lord *Kiun* ; the eastern idol, mentioned by one of the jewish prophets,
 “ and joined with *Moloch*, whom the Rabbins, with good reason, take to be *saturn*.
 “ It was customary, among the easterns, to add *Baal*, or lord, to the proper name of
 “ their gods ; as the latins added *pater*, in *Jupiter*, *Marspiter*, *Diespiter*, *Liber-pater*,
 “ *Jane-pater*, &c. [*Lucilius apud Lactant. Divin. institut. l. iv. c. 3.*] The repeti-
 “ on of it, was so frequent, before their numerous deities ; that our sacred writers
 “ generally mention them in the plural number, *בעלים* the *Baalim*, or lords.—
 “ *Vulcan*, says *Herodotus*, was, among the oldest and most honored of the *Ægyptian*
 “ gods : and, by their neighbors, the *Assyrians* and *Phoenicians*, was identified with
 “ *saturn* and the sun ; because of their similar nature. *Lingua Punica*, *Bal Deus*
 “ *dicitur : apud Assyrios autem Bel dicitur, & saturnus & sol* : says *Servius*, on occasion
 “ of *Belus*, his cup, mentioned by *Virgil*—*Bal-Kiun*, *Bul-kan*, [or *Vulcan*] is the
 “ Lord-fire, the child of the sun ; just as he is in greek, or rather syriac, *ἡφαίστος*
 “ *אבי אש* *Father-fire*. The antients supposed he was transmitted to earth, in
 “ a shooting star, which kindled the vulcanoes in *Lemnos*. Upon which, they built
 “ the fable, put in his mouth, by *Homer*. The Orphic initiations, appointing a
 “ god, or the attribute of a god, to every sphere, give *Pericyonius* to the sphere of
 “ *saturn* ; which the learned *Bochart* derives from *Kiun*, his eastern name. The
 “ real wandering jew, *Benjamin*, one of the greatest travellers of the east, has this dis-
 “ cription of the solar worship, in his *Itinerary*. “ There is a people, says he, of the
 “ posterity of *Chus*, addicted to the contemplation of the stars. They worship the
 “ sun as a god : and the whole country, for half a mile round their town, is filled
 “ with great altars, dedicated to him. By the dawn of morn, they get up, and run
 “ out of town, to wait the rising sun ; to whom, on every altar, there is a conse-
 “ crated image ; not in likeness of a man, but of the solar orb, framed by magic
 “ art. These orbs, as soon as the sun rises, take fire ; and resound with a great
 “ noise ; while every body there, men and women, hold censers in their hands,
 “ and all burn incense to the sun.”

“ One would suspect those orbs to have been filled with some nitrous composition ;
 “ and kindled, by a collection of the rays. It nicely explains, not the shrine of
 “ *Moloch* (which is easily understood to be a portable tabernacle, such as was used by
 “ the *Ægyptians*) but the image of *Kiun*, the star of your gods, which you have made to
 “ yourselves. See Amos v. 26.” [*Consult the Letters on Mythology, p. 89, &c. published*
 “ by Dr. Blackwall, principal of the college, at Aberdeen. See, also, *Spencer de legib. heb.*
 “ edit. Chappelow, p. 664, &c.]

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44, &c.

2. " *As to fixed places of divine worship.* Besides the hints, which
 " I have already given you ; I would farther observe, that, though
 " *our fathers* were so very prone to *idolatry*, yet so gracious was
 " GOD, as to grant unto them a continual symbol of his blessed
 " presence, and that of his own appointing ; which resided in the
 " *tabernacle*, reared by *Moses*, according to the (*model*, or) pattern,
 " which GOD had showed him, in the mount. Which *tabernacle*,
 " *our fathers*, afterwards, brought, into *this land*, under the con-
 " duct of *Joshua*. For GOD assisted him, to drive out the *idolatrous*,
 " and abominably wicked, *Canaanites* ; and gave *our fathers* the
 " possession. But *the tabernacle*, though built with such care and
 " exactness, was the place, where the *symbol of the divine presence*
 " resided ; and towards which they were ordered to worship ; onely
 " 'till the time of erecting *the temple* ; that is, 'till a little after the
 " reign of king *David* ; who was a person, that, for his deep
 " repentance of his two heinous sins, and for his main conduct,
 " was highly approved of GOD^f ; and was desirous to manifest
 " his zeale for the worship of GOD, by building unto him a most
 " magnificent temple.^g But, though GOD was pleased with king
 " *David's* pious zeale, yet he laid so little stress upon haveing such a
 " temple, that he would not suffer him to build it ; because he had
 " been a man of war.^h And, therefore, he onely provided ma-
 " terials. And (according to divine direction) the building of the
 " temple was deferred to the peaceful reign of king *Solomon*,
 " his son.

" [*And you ought to consider, that, if king David was not fit to*
 " *build the temple, because he was a man of blood ; how much lesse fit*
 " *are they, that such a structure should be continued to them, who have*
 " *murthered the great MESSIAH, king David's son and LORD ? And,*
 " farther ; it is evident, that king *David* and the *patriarchs* wor-
 " shipped GOD, as acceptably, before *this temple* was built. Though
 " I readily acknowlege, that both the *tabernacle*, and *temple*, were
 " erected, according to the will and appointment of GOD. And,
 " when used agreeably to the original design and intention of
 " them, I would be so far from speaking detractingly of them ;
 " that, on the contrary, I most highly reverence them.]

" But, you, certainly, set too great a value upon *this temple* ;
 " when you would confine to it *the divine presence*, and all accep-
 " table

Ver. 46. ^f See on Acts xiii. 22.^g 2 Sam. vii. 2, &c. Psal. cxxxii. 1,—5.^h 1 Chron. xxii. 8, 9. and xxviii. 3.

“ *table worship*. For king *Solomon*, at the dedication of it, very
 “ justly acknowledged, that the presence and favor of the most high
 “ GOD are not confined to any *temple* made with hands¹: as, also,
 “ saith the prophet; [*Isa. lxvi. 1, 2.*] *Thus saith the LORD, heaven is*
 “ *my throne, and the earth is my foot-stool*; where, or what, is the
 “ *house, that you will build unto me?* (or to what particular place
 “ would you confine my presence? *Have not I made all things?*
 “ And am not I, the omnipresent being, able to show favor to the
 “ pious and virtuous, in one place as well as another, through-
 “ out the whole creation? Nay; the whole creation is a temple
 “ too narrow for GOD to be confined to.

“ Thus have I given you a brief account of the various periods
 “ of *revelation*, or the several *dispensations* of GOD to men; from
 “ the time, in which *Abraham*, our renowned ancestor, was called,
 “ out of *idolatry*, to the knowledge of the true GOD, unto this very
 “ day, when the *kingdom of the messiah* has begun to take place;
 “ — that seed of *Abraham*, in whom all the nations of the earth
 “ are to be blessed! And what I would have you understand, by
 “ all that has been said, is this: That, in various ages and circum-
 “ stances, GOD hath made various *revelations*, and appointed diffe-
 “ rent positive institutions: That temporal afflictions are consistent
 “ with being in the divine favor; and that a temporal *messiah* is
 “ not to be expected. But that GOD, who of old laid the plan,
 “ for the *successive dispensations*, is now going to introduce the last and
 “ best of them, by erecting his *spiritual kingdom*, under the *messiah*;
 “ who is none other than *Jesus of Nazareth*. And it is no won-
 “ der, that you should treat him, as you did. For you are a stub-
 “ born, obdurate, people; who, though you boast of the *circum-*
 “ *cision of the flesh*, yet you are uncircumcised both in heart and
 “ ears, and incorrigibly bent upon your own wicked ways. You
 “ even reject the very means, which ought to bring you to repen-
 “ tence; refusing the gracious invitations and offers of the *spirit*
 “ of GOD, and treading in the steps of your disobedient ancestors.
 “ Which of the *prophets* have not your *fathers* persecuted? Nay;
 “ they even slew many, who *prophefied* of the coming of that righ-
 “ teous person, the *messiah*; (whom *Abraham, Moses, Israel, David,*
 “ *Solomon, the tabernacle, the temple, the law, the prophets, and all*
 “ the *past dispensations*, did unanimously point at; and some way

T 2

“ or

Ver. 48. ¹ 1 Kings viii. 27. 2 Chron. vi. 18.

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“ or other tend to præpare men for his coming. And yet, notwithstanding all this vast *apparatus* of a long succession of prophecies, shadows, and representations, which GOD, from age to age, hath given, to præpare you for the reception of him;) You, who ought to have received him with the greatest affection and regard, and protected him, from any injurious treatment from others; — You yourselves, I say, have basely betrayed and wickedly murdered him. And, as your sin is much greater than that of your *fathers*, who rejected onely *Moses*, and the *prophets*; you may reasonably expect (unlesse you speedily and sincerely repent) that the judgments of GOD, which followed them, will come upon you, to the uttermost. Nor will it be in the least wonderful, if GOD should depart from you; and, what you have charged me with asserting, should come to passe; *namely*, that your *city* and *temple* should be destroyed; and your *nation* slain, or carried away into a long and various captivity. I have charged you with despising, and murdering the *messiah*. But how should you be supposed to attend to one, who came in so lowly and humble a manner; when the *law*, in which you so much boast, was published, in an awful, pompous manner, amidst troops of angels^k; and yet you have not kept it.” — —

The malice of his enemies prevented his saying any more. For, upon this public and home charge of disobedience to GOD, disrespect to the *law* of *Moses*, and murdering *the great messiah*, they were cut to the heart; and could not forbear showing it, by gnashing upon him with their teeth. And the clamor and uproar were so great, that it was impossible to procede. — St *Stephen*, nevertheless, continued unshaken in mind, and full of *fortitude*; and, by an extraordinary impulse and assistance of the *holy spirit*, he looked up; and, in a clear and lively vision, descryed *the glory*, whereby GOD manifesteth his gracious presence, in *heaven*; and *Jesus* standing at the right hand of that *divine glory*; *namely*, in a posture, which intimated;

Ver. 53. ^k εἰς διατάγας ἀγγέλων. *among troops of angels.*] Vid. *Glassii philolog. sacr.* p. 525. and *Grot.* in loc. Compare, also, with this place, *Deut.* xxxiii. 2. *Psal.* lxxviii. 17. *Gal.* iii. 19. *Heb.* ii. 2. That εἰς, with an accusative case, is, in several places, put for ἐν, with an ablative, see on 2 *Thess.* ii. 4. *Grotius* has well observed that διατάσσειν is a military term. [See *Judg.* iii. 23. in the 70. 1 *Maccab.* vi. 35. 2 *Maccab.* xii. 20.] If the great angel of the covenant delivered the law, from *mount Sinai*, attended by troops of inferior angels, it seems to me to reconcile all the texts, which speak of this subject.

intimated, that he was ready to support and receive him. That discovery was made to him, to animate him, bravely to go through, with his approaching *martyrdom*. And, when the tumult was a little ceased, he cried a loud, and in a kind of transport: "Behold, I even now see heaven opened, and the son of man standing on the right hand of God." ¹ At this, the multitude of his enemies lost all patience; some drowning his voice with their clamor; others stopping their ears, as if he had spoken such blasphemy, as they were unable to bear. ^m And the whole multitude, with one accord, ran furiously upon him; and tumultuously (not upon a judicial trial, and legal sentence; but, after the manner of their *zelotes*;) they hurried him away, out of the city, to stone him. For the execution of criminals, in the wilderness, was to be without the camp. And, in imitation of that, when they settled in *Canaan*, they used to execute their criminals, without the city. ⁿ

Stoneing to death was the punishment, appointed, in their law, for *blasphemers*, and *false prophets*. And (upon a pretence that St. Stephen was guilty of one, or both, of these crimes) they ventured upon stoneing him. Though the power of life and death, in a legal and judicial manner, was taken from them, and lodged in the hands of the *romans* onely. ^o

If *Pilate*, the *roman procurator*, had called them to an account, for such a riot and murder; the leading men among the *jews* would have been very ready to allege, "that they were going onely to try him, according to their law: but that he spoke such intolerable blasphemy, as that the populace fell upon him, and stoned him, before they had proceeded to pass any sentence upon him." Nay; suppose farther, that *Pilate* would not have been put off, with that pretence; but had punished some of the *jews*, for putting St. Stephen to death; without leave obtained, from him, upon a legal trial; they would not have failed to have complained, when *christianity* should afterwards have spread, and made a noise in the world:

Ver. 56. ¹ *Isa.* vi. 1. compared with *Dan.* vii. 13, 14.

Ver. 57. ^m The *jews*, about this time, when they apprehended that any person spoke blasphemy, made no scruple of stoneing him, immediately, without any trial. [See *John* v. 17, 18. and viii. 58 59. and x. 30,—39. and Dr. Lardner's *Credibility*, &c. part. 1. p. 70. 2d. edition; p. 117. 3d. edition.]

Ver. 58. ⁿ *Levit.* xxiv. 14; 23. *Numb.* xv. 35. *Deut.* xvii. 5. *1 Kings* xxi. 13. So *JESUS* suffered, without the city *Jerusalem*. [*John* xix, 17; 20. *Heb.* xiii, 12, 13.]

^o *John* xviii. 31. See Dr. Lardner's *Credibility*, &c. part 1. p. 69, &c. 2d. edition; p. 116, &c. 3d. edition.

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An. Christi world : " Why ! we apprehended some of the most active *christi-*
 34. " *ans*, and indeavored to suppreffe them, and to put a stop to their
 Tiber. 20. " increaseing. But you punished us for it. And they now spread,
 Book I. " by your connivance and protection." But *Pilate* (as hath been
 Chap. III. already observed) had done such things, himself, that he stood in
 Sect. VII. awe of the *jews* ; and dared not to call them to an account, even
 Acts vi. 58. for some of the greatest and most notorious crimes. Nor would
 the providence of GOD permit the *jews*, to have such a plea, against
christianity ; as if it wanted to be supported by the *secular arm*.

The manner of their stoneing persons, was thus : ^p " A cryer
 " went before him, who was to die ; proclameing his name, his
 " crime, and who were the witnesses against him. When they
 " were come, within two or three yards of the place of execution ;
 " they stripped the criminal naked ; except a small covering, for
 " decency, about his midle. The place of execution, from which
 " they threw down the malefactor, was above twice the height of
 " a man. Upon which, he was made to ascend, with his hands
 " bound. When he was ascended, the witnesses laid their hands
 " upon him,^a and then stripped off their upper garment, that they
 " might be fitter for going through the execution." [And the
 witnesses, who stoned *Stephen*, committed their upper garments, to
 the custody of a young man, whose name was *Saul*. We shall
 have occasion to speak of him, hereafter, more at large. It will
 be sufficient, at present, to say, that he was glad of the office ; and
 pleased, indeed, with any thing, which molested the *christians*, to
 whom he had then the greatest aversion.] " From that high
 " place, one of the witnesses threw down the criminal ; and dashed
 " his loins against a great stone ; which was laid there, for that
 " very purpose. If that killed him not ; then the other witness
 " threw, from the same height, a great stone upon his heart, as he
 " lay on his back, and was stuned with the fall. If that dispatched
 " him not ; then all the people fell upon him with stones, 'till he
 " died." St. STEPHEN, in the midst of all this popular fury, and
 such cruel treatment, showed his dying behavior to be as remarkable,
 as the latter part of his life had been. For, notwithstanding their
 rage and virulence, he, with great composure, prayed ; " LORD
 JESUS

^p See what Dr. *Lightfoot* [vol. i. of his works, p. 280.] hath quoted from the
Talmud ; and other commentators upon this place, from other antient *jewish authors*.
 See, also, *Ainsworth* on *Lev. xx. 2.* and *xxiv. 23.*

^a *Deut. xiii. 9, 10. and xvii. 7.*

“JESUS (the true CHRIST, or *messiah*) receive my spirit.”^r And then, makeing a shift to get upon his knees, in the midst of them, he most meekly and charitably, in imitation of his *great* LORD and MASTER,¹ cried aloud: “LORD, lay not this sin to their charge, “so as to punish them according to the weight and aggravation “of it: but yet lead them to repentence, and grant them full re- “mission.”^t And, haveing said so, he composed himself to die, like one falling asleep. And, by his first undergoing a violent death, in defence of *christianity*, he hath obtained the honorable name, and memorial, of *the first christian martyr*.

The *jews*, who came up, from distant countries, to wor- ship GOD at the *temple*, were called *devout persons*.^u A number of them had, since their last coming up to *Jerusalem*, imbraced the *christian religion*. And St. Stephen had, perhaps, been one of *those devout persons*; though (most probably) he had been a more early convert to *christianity*, and one of the hundred and twenty. Notwithstanding his haveing been stoned, as *a false prophet*, and a blasphemer, when *christianity* was fallen under the pupolar odium; yet he had not the burial of a malefactor. But some of those pious and *devout* men, who had also imbraced the *gospel*, even in the height of the rage of the *jews* against him, ventured to testifie their great esteem of the *proto-martyr*. For they took away his body, from the place, where the people had covered him with stones; præpared for him a decent funeral; honored him with their presence. Nay; and even carried his body to the grave, where they made great lamentation over him.^w

Ver. 59. ^r As to praying to our lord Jesus Christ, [see on 1 Theff. iii. 11.] So our dying lord had committed his spirit, into his father's hands. Luke xxiii. 46.

Ver. 60. ^t Luke xxiii. 34.

¹ This prayer of St. Stephen was heard, and remarkably answered in the conversion of Saul.

Ver. 2. ^u ἄνδρες εὐλαβῆς, Acts ii. 5. Dr. Doddridge is mistaken, when he sais, that “I thought (with Dr. Hammond and Mr. Baxter) that the persons, who “are here called *devout men*, were *profelytes*; and that I, also, imagined St. Stephen “to have been *a profelyte*.” I do not know that I ever thought, much lesse asserted, any such thing.

^w Gen. l. 10.

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Book I.

Chap. IV.

Acts viii.

1.

C H A P. IV.

Of the first removeal of the gospel from Jerusalem ; and particularly of it's spreading over Judæa. The character and behavior of Saul of Tarsus. Acts viii. 1,—4.

WITH St. Stephen's life, ended the great harvest of the *jews*, at *Jerusalem*. In that city, first of all, (though it had persecuted and murdered him) JESUS ordered his APOSTLES to begin and preach the *gospel*. And GOD, in his good providence, permitted the *christians*, there, to keep together, 'till many of them had learned the *scheme of christianity*, from the APOSTLES, who were the onely persons, that had received it, from OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST. But, when divers of the *christians* were well instructed, by the APOSTLES ; and had received *spiritual gifts* and *miraculous powers*, themselves, (though in an inferior degree) they became capable of spreading *christianity*. And, then GOD permitted them to be dispersed ; that they might go and plant it, in other places. For, the *persecution* did not cease, with the *martyrdom* of St. Stephen ; but grew, and raged with the more violence. He had charged the *jews*, with the murder of the *messiah* ; as their wicked *fore-fathers* had murdered the *prophets*, who had *prophefied*, before-hand, of his coming. And he had also accused them, of breaking the *law of Moses* ; for which they pretended so high a veneration. But, above all, the spreading of *christianity* had struck, so much, at their unjust *authority* over the people ; that the leading men, at *Jerusalem*, as they had succeeded in cutting off St. Stephen, resolved upon nothing lesse, than the destruction of the whole *sect* of the *christians*. Among their most violent persecutors, there was a young man, whose name was *Saul*. It hath been, already, observed of him, that the false witnesses, who stoned St. Stephen, committed their upper garments to his custody, 'till they had finished the execution. And he was not averse to the office. For he heartily approved of that cruel treatment of the *first martyr* ; and would have been glad to have crushed the *christian religion* intirely.

tirely. He was borne at *Tarsus*, the chief city of the province of *Cilicia*. His parents were both of them *hebrew jews*^a; and his father, who was of the tribe of *Benjamin*, was a *freeman of Rome*. How he came by his freedom, I have not found any satisfactory account. But, as *Saul* was the son of a *freeman*, he was *free-borne*. To that freedom were annexed several great privileges; which he afterwards did not fail to insist upon, where-ever it could be of any service to him. He was, most probably, educated, in his younger days, in *Tarsus*, his native city; where, as *Strabo*^b observeth, there were several schools and scholars, not at all inferior to those of *Athens*, or *Alexandria*. And, where the *gentiles* had such seats of learning, the *jews* very often received some advantage thereby. That was, very likely, the place, where *Saul* attained his skill, in the *greek literature*. For that he was no stranger to their *philosophy*, and *poetry*, appeareth from his quoteing *Aratus*,^c (who was of the same province of *Cilicia*;) *Menander*,^d and *Epimenides*.^e From *Tarsus*, he went to *Jerusalem*; where he was entered into the sect of the *pharisees*, and studied the *law of Moses*, together with the *traditions of the elders*. By sitting at the feet of *Rabbi Gamaliel*, and using great diligence and application, he made a progresse, in the *jewish learning*, beyond most of his equals in age and standing. He is said to have *sate* at the feet of *Gamaliel*. For (according to the *jewish custom*) the masters *sate* upon a seat, raised pretty high; and their scholars used *to sit*, at their feet, upon mats, or upon the ground. In allusion to which, *Mary*, the sister of *Martha*, is said to have *sate at our LORD's feet, and to have heard his words*.^f

But, besides a learned education, *Saul's* parents had him, also, instructed in an handicraft trade. This might be done, partly, for an innocent and useful amusement, in his leisure hours. But, principally, for an honest support: if, in the various vicissitudes of life, such support should be wanted. It was then so common, even for persons in rich and plentiful circumstances, to bring up their children, in that manner, as that it was a *maxim* among the *jews*;

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Ver. 1. ^a *Father Simon* [in his *critical history of the old testament*, book 2. p. 121.] saith, “ By the *hellenist jews*, are meant, all the *jews*, who spoke *greek*, in what place soever they lived, even in the territories of *Jerusalem* or *Babylon*,” &c. In like manner, they might be called *hebrews*, who spoke the *hebrew tongue*, in whatsoever place they lived; even tho’ in *græcian cities*, such as *Tarsus* is acknowledged to have been. [See what is said, more at large, on *Acts vi. 1.*]

^b *Lib. 14. Wetsten in loc.*
^c *Tit. i. 12.*

^d *Acts xvii. 28.*

^e *1 Cor. xv. 33.*

^f *Luke x. 39.*

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An. Christi 34. Tiber. 21. Book I. Chap. IV. Acts viii. 1. "He, who did not bring up his son to a trade, did, in effect, teach him to be a thief." And, indeed, no man knoweth to what straits he, or his children, may be reduced; whatever his present circumstances are. — *Saul's* trade was to make tents of linen, or of skins: such as, in those hot countries, they sometimes lived in, during the summer season; such as, travelers made use of; where they had no houses, nor caravansaries to lodge in; and such, as soldiers lodged in, when incamped in the field. It were easie to multiply instances, in other ages and nations, of princes, priests, and persons of great eminence, who have been skilled, and worked with their own hands, in agriculture, carving, and other meaner handicraft trades. Whereby it would appear that *Saul's* case was not singular; nor his education, the meaner, nor lesse liberal, upon that account.

It is a matter of some difficulty, to settle the *chronology* of St. *Stephen's* martyrdom, and *Saul's* conversion. One would be apt to think, that, if *Saul* had been studying under *Gamaliel*, during the time of OUR LORD's personal ministry, here upon earth; and had heard of his fame; one of so much warmth of temper, and distinguished zeale, would have inquired into the facts; and been curious, either to see OUR LORD, and acknowledge him for the *messiah*; or to oppose him, as an *impostor*. And much more, after CHRIST's resurrection, would one have expected him, either to have imbraced *christianity*, or to have appeared more early against CHRIST's *disciples*; — if he had been, all the while, at *Jerusalem*; and knew, how much, their numbers daily increased. These things may, perhaps, make some incline to think, that he had formerly sat, at the feet of *Gamaliel*; but that, of late years, he had returned, to his native country; and never heard any thing, of certainty, concerning *christianity*, 'till he came up to *Jerusalem*, upon some great festival, a little before the death of the *proto-martyr*. But, on the other hand, it must be acknowledged, that, then, he must have been grown up, to maturity; and have finished his studies, for some time. And, upon that supposition, one cannot easily account for so zealous a *jew's* neglecting to go up, to *Jerusalem*, at the great festivals; where he must have seen, and heard, as much, or more, of the *christians*, than at any other time. I, therefore, according to the plain hints, which he himself hath given us, [*Acts* xxii. 3. and xxvi. 4, 5. *Gal.* i. 14.] do apprehend, that *Saul* was borne at *Tarsus*, and spent his childhood there. But that, in his early youth, and as soon as ever he was capable of it, he was removed to *Jerusalem*; to study in that city; and continued his studies, there, 'till about

about this time. But that, by reason of his unripe age, he had not, before, appeared, in the world; nor ever attempted to inquire into the truth and reasonableness of the *christian religion*. — However; now, he comes out, with all the warmth of his own natural temper, the fire of the *academy*, and the zeal, and bigotry, of a *pupil* to the *pharisaical doctors*.

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Accordingly; we find, [Acts vii. 58.] that he is called, *a young man*: possibly, not much (if any thing) above twenty years of age. And what, in part, seemeth to confirm this, is, that OUR LORD would not constitute him an APOSTLE, 'till he had been, about nine years, a *christian*, and a *prophet*. For his age might not be sufficient, for an office of such weight and dignity, any more than his acquaintance with *christianity*. — Commentators have, indeed, been unwilling to take the word νεανίας, [young man,] Acts vii. 58. in it's proper and usual meaning: because, from Philemon, ver. 9. they have gathered, that he was *an old man*, in the year 63. Whereas; if, in the year 35, he was, onely, about twenty; in the year 63, he would scarce be fifty. And, under fifty, he could not call himself, with any great propriety, *Paul the aged*. In answer to all which, I would observe, that the word πρεσβύτερος, which we translate *the aged*, [Philem. ver. 9.] doeth sometimes signifie *an ambassador*. And, if the word ever signifie so, it is most probable that St. PAUL designed it, in that sense; as he used the like expression, and represented himself as acting the *ambassador* for GOD. [2 Cor. v. 20.] Or, πρεσβευτης, which commonly signifies *an ambassador*, might be the original reading, [Philem. ver. 9.] And by the omission of the small letter ε, might be changed into πρεσβύτερος, which is the present reading. For in his *epistle* to the *Laodiceans*, (commonly called *the epistle to the Ephesians*,) he calls himself *an ambassador in bonds*. [Eph. vi. 20.] Now that *epistle* was writ, about the same time; and sent along, with the *epistle to Philemon*. — To which, it may be added, that there is no other instance, in all his writings, of his calling himself PAUL *the aged*.^s

As I suppose OUR LORD's ministry to have continued, onely, two years and a half; and that Saul did not imbrace *christianity*, 'till the year 35; I, by this mean, remove his *conversion* to a greater distance from CHRIST's ascension, than the *chronologers* commonly do. Though, as to the year of his conversion, and in the succedeing history of him, and of the *christian church*, I (generally speaking) fall

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^s See this discussed, more at large, in note ^c on Philem. ver. 9. 2d. edition.

An. Christi in with the chronology of bishop *Pearson*; which seemeth, now, to have the most universal approbation.

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And, what confirmeth me, that we fix the conversion of *Saul*, in the right year of the *christian æra*, is, the time and occasion of the ceasing of the persecution; of which we shall speak, more particularly, hereafter. For *Josephus*^h hath informed us, that, for two years after his accession to the empire, *Caius* behaved very well. But, in the third year, he sent *Petronius*, into *Judæa*, with orders to set up his statue, in the temple; and to destroy the whole nation, if they opposed him. That put the *jews* into a great consternation; and, most probably, occasioned their ceasing to molest the *christians*, that they might look after their own safety. If, therefore, that happened in the begining of the third year of *Caius*, it will fix *Saul's* conversion, in the twenty-second year of *Tiberius*. For, from his conversion, to the ceasing of the persecution, was a little above the space of three years; as appeareth from his own account.ⁱ

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1, &c.

So violently did the persecution rage, soon after the martyrdom of *St. Stephen*; that (except the twelve *APOSTLES*) all the leading men, among the *christians*, were dispersed, far and wide: Some of them traveling through the regions of *Judæa*, and *Samaria*; others to *Damascus*, *Phænicia*, the island *Cyprus*, and to several parts of *Syria*.^k The twelve *APOSTLES* did, indeed, with great wisdom and bravery, tarry still at *Jerusalem*,^l to assert and maintain the persecuted interest; and to consult how they might best sute all the rising, and unforeseen, emergencies of the *church*, in that it's tender and infant state.

In the height of this persecution, *Saul*, flushed with the blood of *St. Stephen*, grew outrageous, makeing dreadful havock among the *christians*. And (as he had licence from his superiors^m) he hunted them, from place to place; breaking violently into their houses; dragging them away, to prison, without mercy; and scourging them in the synagogues, 'till he compelled them to blaspheme the name of

JESUS,

^h *Antiq.* l. 18. c. 7. § ult. & c. 8. §. 2.

ⁱ *Gal.* I. 15, — 18. and 2 *Cor.* xi. 32, 33. compared with what *St. Luke* saies, *Acts* ix. 25, — 31.

^k See *CHRIST's* direction, *Matt.* x. 23.

^l In *Beza's* antient copy, commonly called the *Cambridge manuscript*, there is an addition to *ver.* I. πλὴν τῶν ἀποστόλων, [οἱ ἑμεινῶν ἐν Ἱερουσαλὴμ.] besides the *APOSTLES*, [who remained in *Jerusalem*.]

^m *Acts* xxvi. 9, 10.

JESUS; not spareing even the weak and tender sex. — So furious and cruel doeth *bigotry* and *persecution* render men; even beyond what often happeneth in battles and sieges! — But all this tended, onely, to disperse them, and spread *christianity* the more. And, in the first place, such, as the *persecution* drove, from *Jerusalem*, planted it in several other towns and villages of *Judæa*.

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C H A P. V.

Of the second removeal, which the gospel made, from Jerusalem; or of it's being planted in Samaria.
Acts viii. 5, — 25.

S E C T. I.

An account of the antient difference between the Jews, and the Samaritanes.

AFTER OUR LORD himself had preached, in *Jerusalem*,^a he went and preached in *Judæa*; ^b and then in *Samaria* ^c. Just before his ascension, he ordered his APOSTLES, to tarry at *Jerusalem*; 'till the pouring down of the *holy spirit*; and intimated, that then they were to be his witnesses; first in *Jerusalem*; then in *Judæa*; and, after that, in *Samaria*.^d And (though OUR LORD himself, as *messiah* of the *jews*, or APOSTLE and minister of the *circumcision*, preached in person, onely to the *lost sheep of the house of Israel*; yet) he farther ordered his APOSTLES, that they should spread the *gospel* to the uttermost parts of the earth. This order they obeyed; and that in the very method præscribed by OUR LORD. For, *christianity* had begun at *Jerusalem*, as the *prophets* had prædicted, and CHRIST had commanded. And it had since spread, among the *jews*, in other towns and villages of *Judæa*. — The next removeal, therefore, was to *Samaria*; whither it was carried, upon this occasion. The *christians* kept together, at *Jerusalem*, 'till many of them had learned the *scheme of the gospel doctrine*, from the APOSTLES. But the late persecution had dispersed them, into several places;

Ver. 5. ^a John ii. 13, &c.
^d Acts i. 8.

^b John iii. 22.

^c John, chap. iv.

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places; whither they fled for safety; and, among the rest, some fled to *Samaria*. That we may observe the futeableness of this gradation; and how proper an introduction it was, to the conversion of the devout gentiles, who were to be converted the next; let us carefully consider, how things stood, between the *jews*, and the *samaritanes*.—Some time after the ten tribes had revolted, from the house of *David*; even in the thirty-first year of *Asa*, king of *Judah*, began *Omri* to reign over *Israel*. Six years he reigned in *Tirza*.^e And then he bought the hill of *Samaria*, of *Shemer*, for two talents of silver; on which he built a city, and called it *Samaria*, from the name of *Shemer*, of whom he had bought the ground. From that time, it became the capital city, for the kings of *Israel*; 'till *Shalmanezzer*, king of *Assyria*, came, with an army; and (after a three years siege) took the city, and carried captive the ten tribes of *Israel*; dispersing them, in *Media*; that they might not revolt any more.^f *Eserbaddon*, the grandson of *Shalmanezzer*, who is called *Afnappar*, [*Ezra* iv. 10.] succeeded his father *Sennacherib*, in the kingdom of *Assyria*. Having enlarged his dominions, and augmented his strength, by seizing upon *Babylon* and *Chaldaea*; he marched, with a great army to recover, what his father had lost, in *Syria* and *Palæstine*.^g And then he took captive most of the few *Israelites*; whom his grandfather had left, in the land of *Israel*; carrying them away, into *Babylon* and *Assyria*. And, to plant the country, he brought people, from *Babylon*, *Cuthah*, *Ava*, *Hamath*, and *Sepharvaim*.^h But they, being an idolatrous and a very wicked people, were at first molested, by lions; and many of them devoured by them. To prevent which calamity, *Eserbaddon* sent, among them, a priest, from among the *jews*, whom his grandfather had carried away captive; who instructed them in the knowledge of the GOD of *Israel*.ⁱ For, they looked upon him, as the GOD of that particular country; who would not be appeased, unless he was worshiped by it's inhabitants. These new inhabitants received the name of *samaritanes*, from the country which they planted. And, from that time, they worshiped the true GOD, together with their idol-gods; 'till *Nehemiah*, intent upon a reformation, at *Jerusalem*, insisted upon it, that such of the *jews*, as had married women of other nations, should, according to the law of *Moses*, put them away;

^e 1 Kings xvi. 23, 24.

^f 2 Kings xvii. 5, 6. and xviii. 9, 10, 11, 12.

^g 2 Kings xix. 35. and 2 Chron. xxxii. 21.

^h That this was done by *Eserbaddon*, see *Ezra* iv. 2. 10. See also *Prideaux's Connection*, &c. vol. 1. p. 30. 4th edition, 8vo. 1718.

ⁱ 2 Kings xvii. 24. — 29.

away; lest they should prove a snare to them, and intice them to idolatry.^k Some refused to part with their wives; and them *Nehemiah* banished. Among whom was a son of *Joiada*; the son of *Eliashib*, the high-priest; whom *Josephus* calleth *Manasseh*. He had married *Nicaso*, the daughter of *Sanballat*, the *Horonite*, who was deputy-governour of *Samaria*; ¹ to whom he fled; and several jews along with him, upon the like occasion. *Sanballat* obtained leave of *Darius Nothus*, king of *Persia*, (to whom *Samaria* was then in subjection,^m) to build, upon mount *Gerizim*, a temple, like to that, at *Jerusalem*; and there to make *Manasseh*, his son in law, high-priest. From that time, *Samaria* became the common refuge for the vagabond jews. And, if any of them were called to an account for the breach of the jewish law, especially in it's rituals, such as the eating forbidden meats, the breaking of the sabbath, or the like; they presently fled over to *Samaria*; and there they were kindly received.ⁿ The *samaritanes*, by this mean, became a mixed people; consisting partly of jews, and partly of the posterity of that people, whom the kings of *Assyria* had planted there. However; by haveing a temple, and the law of *Moses*, and so many jews among them, they forsook their idolatry, and conformed to the law of *Moses*; but are said not to have received the prophets, nor regarded the traditions of the elders.

This quarrel was, indeed, of an old standing. And, when it was once begun, several things helped to aggravate and inflame it. The *samaritanes*, in the first place, had, in possession, the land of *Israel*; that belonged to the kindred of the jews, the ten tribes, which were carried captive into *Assyria*. They had opposed *Nehemiah*, and his associates, in the building the temple at *Jerusalem*, and repairing the walls thereof.^o On the other hand, the tribute of *Samaria* was assigned, first by *Cyrus*, and afterwards by *Darius*, kings of *Persia*, towards repairing the temple at *Jerusalem*, after the *Babylonish* captivity; and for the furnishing the jews with sacrifices; that oblations and prayers might be daily offered up, for the king, the royal family, and the whole *Persian* empire.

^k Nehem. x. 30. and xiii. 23, &c. Exod. xxxiv. 16. Deut. vii. 3.

¹ Joseph. Antiq. l. ii. c. 8. § 2. Neh. xiii. 28.

^m *Josephus* (*Antiq. Jud.* l. ii. c. 8. § 4.) through a great defect among the jews, in the chronology of the *Babylonian*, and *Medo-Persian*, empires, ascribes this grant, to *Alexander the great*. Whereas; according to the most exact chronology, it must have been a grant of *Darius Nothus*, almost an hundred years, before the *Persian* empire was conquered, by *Alexander the great*. [See Sir *Isaac Newton's* chronology, p. 357, 365. *Prideaux's connection*, vol. i. p. 410, &c. 4th edit. 8vo. printed 1718.]

^a Joseph. Antiq. Jud. l. ii. c. 8. § ult.

^o Nehem. iv. & vi.

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An. Christi ^{34.} empire. ^p That contribution, the *samaritanes* abhorred, as an indignity. And yet, when they made application to get it off, they were reprov'd, and were commanded to continue it. The author of the book of *Ecclesiasticus*,^q in reckoning up the nations, that were most odious to the *jews*, mentions them that sate upon the mountain of *Samaria*; and the foolish people, who dwelt in *Sichem*; as "those, who were the most odious and detestable: A nation, that his heart abhorred, and who deserved not to be accounted a nation." In one word, they did not omit any occasion, on either side, to testify their dislike of one another. And thus it too often happens, between different religious sects, when they quarrel for any time. Every thing widens the breach: and the nearer they come to one another, in general, in their doctrine, discipline, and worship, the more furiously and violently they contend, for their own little peculiarities, and party-distinctions.

But what most of all incensed the *jews*, was, the above-mentioned schism and apostasy of *Manasseh*, and his companions; who had erected a temple and an altar, upon *mount Gerizim*, in direct opposition to that at *Jerusalem*: allegeing, that, as some of the patriarchs had worshiped upon *mount Gerizim*; ^r — as GOD ordered the blessings to be pronounced, from thence, upon *Israel*, when they came out of the land of *Aegypt*; ^t — and as *Joshua* had accordingly caused the blessings of GOD to be pronounced from thence; ^t — therefore, that must be the place, where men ought to worship. Nay; they had not scrupled to corrupt the five books of *Moses*, to countenance their building a temple, there; and foisted in a paragraph; wherein GOD is represented, as pointing out *mount Gerizim*, for the place, where he would have his temple built, ^u and where men ought to worship him.

But

^p Joseph. Antiq. Jud. l. 11. c. 4. § 9.

^q Ecclus. l. 25, 26.

^r Gen. xii. 6, 7. and xiii. 4. and xxxiii. 18, 19, 20.

^t Deut. xi. 29. and

xxvii. 11, 12.

^t Josh. viii. 33.

^u The *samaritanes* alleged that *Joshua*, on his having passed the river *Jordan*, built an altar, on *mount Gerizim*, of twelve stones, taken out of that river, in his passage; according as GOD had commanded, by *Moses*. [Deut. xxvii. 2, — 7.] And this, they hold to be the very altar, upon which they still sacrifice, on that mountain, to this very day. But, to make out this last part of the argument, and thereby procure the greater veneration to *mount Gerizim*, and their place of worship thereupon; they have been guilty of a very great prevarication, in corrupting the text. For, whereas the command of GOD is, [Deut. xxvii. 4, 5.] that they should set up the altar, upon *mount Ebal*, they have made a sacrilegious change, in the text; and instead of *mount Ebal*, have put in *mount Gerizim*, the better to serve their cause, by it. This corruption, the *jews* loudly charge the *samaritanes* with. And they, as loudly, retort it upon them; and say, that the *jews* have corrupted the text, in that place, by putting

But (besides their receiveing all *apostate jews*, and interpolateing the *sacred writeings*) the *samaritanes* were ever ready to show their contempt, to such as worshiped, at *Jerusalem*; or to do any indignity, that they could, to the *temple* there. Of the former, we have one

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putting *mount Ebal*, in their copies, where it should be *mount Gerizim*; and bring this argument for it; that *mount Gerizim*, haveing been the mountain, on which the *blessings* were to be declared: and *mount Ebal* appointed for the place, from whence the *curses* were to be denounced; the *mountain of blessing* was very proper, and the *mountain of cursing* very improper, on which to build an altar to GOD. [See Maundrel's travels, 3d edition, 8vo. p. 60.] But, notwithstanding this allegation, in their behalf; all other *copies*, and *translations*, of the *pentateuch* make against them, and prove the corruption to be on their side. And it very much aggravates their guilt, herein; that they have not onely corrupted the *scriptures*, in this place; but have also interpolated them, with the following corruption: For, *Exod. xx.* after the tenth commandment, they have subjoined the following words, taken out of the xith and xxviith chapters of *Deuteronomy*. "And it shall be, when the LORD, thy GOD, hath brought thee, into the land of the *Canaanites*, whither thou goest to possesse it; that thou shalt set up two great stones, and plaister them with plaister; and thou shalt write, upon these stones, all the words of this law. And it shall be, when you are gone over *Jordan*, that you shall set up these stones, which I command you, this day, in *mount Gerizim*. And thou shalt build, there, an altar, unto the LORD, thy GOD; an altar of stones. Thou shalt not lift up any iron tool upon them. Thou shalt build the altar of the LORD, thy GOD, of whole stones. And, upon it, thou shalt offer burnt offerings, to the LORD, thy GOD. And thou shalt sacrifice peace-offerings; and shalt eat, there; and rejoice, before the LORD, thy GOD. This mountain is on the other side *Jordan*, by the way, where the sun goeth down; in the land of the *Canaanites*, who dwell in the *champion*, over against *Gilgal*, beside the planes of *Moreh*, which are over against *Sichem*." This corrupt alteration in one place, and corrupt addition in another, which the *samaritanes* have made, merely to serve a bad cause, render the *samaritane copy* of lesse authority, in all other places; where, either by alteration, or addition, it differeth from that of the *jews*. [See the *samaritane copy of the pentateuch*, *Exod. xx. 17.* *Prideaux's connection*, vol. I. p. 422, &c. 4th edition, 8vo. 1718.]

About one hundred and sixty years before the birth of CHRIST, *Onias*, the son of *Onias*, the *high-priest*, being unjustly disappointed of the high-priesthood, at *Jerusalem*, fled into *Aegypt*; and ingratiated himself, so far, with king *Ptolemy Philometor*, and his queen *Cleopatra*; that, after some years, they gave him leave, to build a temple in *Aegypt*, after the model of that, at *Jerusalem*. Upon which, the quarrel was revived afresh, between the *jews* and *samaritanes*, who dwelt at *Alexandria*; "Whether *Jerusalem*, or *mount Gerizim*, was the place appointed, by the law of *Moses*, for the building of a temple, and where GOD ought to be worshiped?" The contention for a while was excedeing fierce; 'till, at last, it came to open arms. This made it a proper affair, for the cognizance of the *civil magistrate*. And both parties agreed to refer it, to the king, and his council; on condition that, when both sides were heard, they, who were vanquished, should be put to death. Two advocates were appointed, on each side, to plead the cause. Upon which, the *jews* made it so evident, from the succession of the *high-priests*, and other arguments, that they had antiquity and truth on their side, that the king gave sentence in favor of them; and condemned the two advocates, for the *samaritanes*, to be put to death. [Joseph. *Antiq. Jud.* l. 13. c. 3.]

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X

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An. Christi 34. Tiber. 21. Book I. Chap. V. Sect. I. Acts viii. 5. remarkable instance. [*Luke ix. 51, &c.*] For, when OUR SAVIOR appeared to be going up, from *Galilee*, to worship, in the temple, at *Jerusalem*, he sent his disciples into a *samaritane* village, to provide entertainment for him. But the *samaritanes* would not receive him; because he was going up, to worship, at *Jerusalem*. — And the rancor of the *jews*, against the *samaritanes*, doeth as planely appear, by the proposel, which two of the disciples made to OUR LORD, upon that occasion; who asked him, “If they should command fire, to come down from heaven, to revenge the unkindnesse; and destroy those *samaritanes*; as the prophet *Elijah* had done to two idolatrous captains, with their fifty men.”* OUR LORD, indeed, (who knew that the *samaritanes* were not then as bad as idolators, how vile soever the *jews* accounted them; and who abhorred persecution, in matters of religion, in all the degrees and branches of it) rebuked them for their rash zeale; and pointed out, to them, the meeknesse and benevolence of the christian doctrine; which is calculated to heal differences; and not to revenge, or widen, them.

And there is another instance, recorded by *Josephus*; which, though it did not happen 'till *Cumanus* was procurator; that is, about seventeen years after this time; yet giveth light and confirmation to what hath just been mentioned, out of the gospel. “Moreover; a difference (saith he^y) arose between the *samaritanes* and *jews*, on this occasion. The *Galileans* used, at the festivals, to go to the holy city, through *Samaria*. As they were, at this time, going through a village, called *Ginæa* (which lieth upon the borders of *Samaria*, and of the great plane) some of the inhabitants set upon them, and killed several. The chief men of *Galilee*, hearing of this, applied to *Cumanus*; and desired that he would revenge the death of such as were slain. But he, having been bribed by the *samaritanes*, regarded them not. However; the *jews* took arms, and endeavored to revenge themselves; plundering, and burning, some villages of the *samaritanes*. For this, *Cumanus* severely chastised the *jews*; killing some, but takeing others of them alive.”

And the following is as remarkable an instance of the readinesse of the *samaritanes* to do any indignity to the temple, at *Jerusalem*. For, when

* The prophet, *Elijah*, acted by divine direction, or a prophetic impulse; but the two disciples were animated, by a spirit of party-zele, rage, and revenge. Therein, the two cases widely differed. And for that reason, principally, OUR LORD blamed his two disciples: though the prophet, *Elijah*, was not, in the least, culpable. [See *Mr. Morris his excellent sermon on 2 Kings i. 11, 12.*]

^y *Joseph. Antiq. Jud. l. 20. c. 6. § 1. & de Bell. Jud. l. 2. c. 12. § 3.*

when Coponius was procurator of Judæa, the priests, haveing opened the doors of the temple, at midnight, according to their custom, at the time of the *passover*; some *samaritanes* entered the city privately; and, going up to the temple, they strewed dead men's bones, in the porticoes, and all about the temple; to defile the place, and show their contempt of, and spite against, it. For which reason, the priests, ever after, guarded the temple more strictly.² This is reckoned to have been done, at that *passover*, at which OUR LORD went up to Jerusalem, when he was onely twelve years old; and so much surprized the *jewish doctors* and *rabbies*, with hearing them, and asking them questions.^a

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This quarrel, by being carried on, for a long time; and increased, by such repeted acts of hostility; did at length so highly inflame the rancor of the *jews*,^b that they published a curse and an *anathema* against them; the worst, and the bitterest, that ever was denounced against any people.^c For they not onely forbade all *jews* to have any manner of communication with them; but also cursed the *samaritanes* in their meats and drinks; declareing them all to be as *swine's flesh*; and strictly prohibiting all *jews* from tasteing any thing, which had belonged to a *samaritane*, or to have any manner of dealings with them; so as even to ask, or receive, so small a kindnesse as a draught of water.^d

OUR LORD, indeed, in his passing through *Samaria*, did not think himself bound, by the rules, which the *jews* followed; as he was not

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moved

² Joseph. Antiq. Jud. l. 18. c. 2. § 2.

^a Luke ii. 42, &c. Vid. Clerici Hist. Ecclesiastic. p. 226.

^b I have not taken notice of Josephus his reflections upon the *samaritanes*. For instance: their claiming kindred with the *jews*, and allegeing that they were descended from Jacob and Joseph, when the *jews* were in prosperity; and their utter disclaiming all relation to them, when the *jews* were in adversity; [Antiq. Jud. l. 9. c. 14. § 3. & l. 11. c. 8. § 6.] their relapseing into idolatry, especially in the time of Antiochus; and their readinesse to persecute the *jews*, for not worshipping idols along with them, when they had power, and opportunity: [Antiq. Jud. l. 12. c. 5. § 5.] I have not, I say, taken notice of these reflections; because Josephus was himself a *jew*, violently prejudiced again the *samaritanes*, and has taken all occasions to reflect upon them. If we had a *samaritane history*, we should, very probably, find the same, or as bitter, reflections made upon the behavior of the *jews* towards them. But, we ought not intirely to credit the one, or the other. They were too much parties, to speak with due candor and moderation of one another. And we may reasonably suppose, that, when there was a small fault, they aggravated it, and represented it worse than it really was; and sometimes accused one another of great crimes, where there was little, or no, foundation.

^c Prideaux his connection, vol. I. p. 414. 4th edition, 8vo.

^d John iv. 9.

An. Christi moved by the passions, with which they were possessed. But the popular prejudice plainly appears, from the woman of *Samaria*'s being so vastly surprized that OUR SAIVOR, being a *jew*, should ask even a draught of water of her, who was a *samaritane*.^e

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Nay, farther; — the *jews* made a decree that no *samaritane* should ever be admitted as a *profelyte* to the *jewish religion*. And, finally, they delivered all *samaritanes* over to eternal damnation; as if that also had been in their power. The worst name, which they could give any person, was to call him a *Cuthæan*, or *samaritane*. And they used the most virulent and opprobrious language, that they could invent, when they said to OUR SAIVOR, [*John viii. 48.*] “Say we not well, Thou art a *samaritane*, and hast a dæmon?” For they abhorred no people so much; and the enmity between them must have been the greatest that can be conceived.^f

The city *Samaria* was, for a long time, the chief city and *metropolis* of the *samaritane sect*. But *Sichem* became their *metropolis*, in the time of *Alexander the great*; and hath continued so, to this day. *Alexander* had made *Andromachus*, a great favorite of his, governor of *Syria* and *Palæstine*. And, when he came to *Samaria*, to settle some matters there, the *samaritanes* (apprehending, very probably, that they were not favored equally with the *jews*) mutinied against him; and, by setting fire to the house where he was, they burned him alive. The news greatly affected *Alexander*; who caused such, as had had any hand in the murther, to be put to death; and drove all the rest of the inhabitants out of the city; planting there, instead of them, a colony of his *Macedonians*; and giving their other territories to the *jews*, free from all tributes.^h The *samaritanes*, who survived that calamity, retired to *Sichem*. It was situated in a narrow valley between mount *Gerizim*, on the south; and mount *Ebal*, on the north; in a part of the country, which seems to have taken it's name from *Sichem*, the son of *Hamor*.ⁱ There had been a small town, built there, in the early ages of the world; and *Jeroboam*, the first king of the ten tribes, either rebuilt or enlarged it.^k *Josephus*,^l indeed, speaketh onely of his building a palace there: though he call-eth *Sichem*, *πόλις*, a town, or city. The *jews* called it *Sichar*; that is

^e Dr. Lardner's *Credibility*, &c. part I. p. 166, 2d. edit. p. 280, 3d edit.

^f *Prideaux*, ubi supra.

^g *Joseph. Antiq. Jud.* l. 11. c. 8. § 6.

^h *Q. Curt.* l. 4. c. 8. *Prideaux* his *connexion*, &c. vol. I. p. 499, 500. 4th edition, 8vo. *Joseph. contra Apion*, l. 2. § 4.

ⁱ *Maundrel's travels*, 3d edition, p. 59. *Gen.* xxxiii. 18, 19.

^k *1 Kings* xii. 25.

^l *Antiq. Jud.* l. 8. c. 8. § 4.

is, *the drunken city*, by way of reproach.^m And, as the prophet *Isaiab* had called the *Ephraimites*, who lived in those parts, [*siccorim*, or *siccoree*,] *drunkards*; ^{34.} ^{Tiber. 21.} they had that text on their side, for the justifying of that name. Near unto this place, was the field, which *Jacob* bought, of the children of *Hamor*; and gave unto his son, *Joseph*, a little before his death. There *Joseph's* bones were buried; and (probably) the bones of the other *patriarchs* were carried along with them, when the children of *Israel* went out of *Ægypt*, and buried there, also. And, within the same plot of ground, was *Jacob's well*; at which, OUR SAVIOR sat down, when he discoursed with the woman of *Samaria*. The city *Samaria* was demolished; and the descendents of those *Macedonians*, whom *Alexander the great* had placed there, were dispersed, or destroyed, about two hundred years after, by *John Hyrcanus*, high-priest, and prince of the *jews*. For, after a year's siege, the town was surrendered into his hands. And he forthwith demolished the place; drawing trenches, through, and a-crosse, the ground; and filling them with water, that there might not remain the least mark of a city's haveing ever been there.^o However: though the city was demolished, the surrounding country, including the two tribes of *Ephraim* and *Manasseth*, received, and retained, the name of *Samaria*. The city was rebuilt, within an hundred years, by *Herod the great*; and called *Sebaste*, in honor of *Augustus Cæsar*,^p whose greek name was *Sebastos*. But it was no longer called *Samaria*; nor was it any more the head-city of the *samaritane sect*. Not long before *Hyrcanus* destroyed *Samaria*, he took (besides several other places) the city *Sichem*, and mount *Gerizim*. And then he demolished the temple there, which had continued for about two hundred years.^q *Herod the great* did, indeed, build the *samaritanes* another magnificent temple, in the middle of *Sebaste*.^r But they never valued it, because it stood not upon mount *Gerizim*. Yet, though the temple on mount *Gerizim* was never rebuilt, the *samaritanes* still continued to have an altar there; on which they offered their usual sacrifices. Nay; it is said that the head of that sect doeth still live at *Sichem*, (which was afterwards called *Neapolis*;^s and is now, by a corrupt pronounciation of that word, called *Naplouza*,^t or

^m John iv. 5. *Prideaux his connection*, vol. 1. p. 423.

ⁿ Isa. xxviii. 1.

^o Joseph. Antiq. Jud. l. 13. c. 10. § 3.

^p Joseph. Antiq. Jud. l. 13. c. 8. § 5.

^q Ibid. l. 13. c. 9. § 1.

^r Ibid.

l. 15. c. 8. § 5.

^s Joseph. de Bell. Jud. l. 4. c. 8. §. 1.

^t Relandi

Palæstina sacra, p. 1005. *Prideaux his connection*, vol. 1. p. 423. 4th edition, 8vo.

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or *Naplosa*^u) and that they continue, to this day, to worship and sacrifice, upon *mount Gerizim*, according to the *levitical law*; having still a small *temple*, or place for worship, there.^x

CHAP. V. SECT. II.

The præparation of the samaritanes for the reception of christianity. OUR LORD mercifully bore with the præjudices of his disciples, 'till the spirit was poured out: And did not send them to the samaritanes; though he himself treated the samaritanes, in the same manner as he treated the jews. Philip, the deacon, now converteth the samaritanes; probably at *Sichar*, or *Sichem*; where OUR LORD himself had been. Acts viii. 5,—8.

FROM the long account, which hath been given, of the *samaritanes*, in the foregoing *section*, they appear to have been much better præpared for the reception of *christianity*, than most of the *gentiles*. For they acknowledged and worshiped the *true GOD*, and received the five books of *Moses*. Nay; upon some accounts, they were better præpared, than the body of the *jewish nation*. For they believed a future state of rewards and punishments, which the *saducees* denied; and rejected the *traditions of the elders*, which fettered the minds of the *pharisees*, and increased their aversion to *christianity*. The old testament *prophets* spoke of the *messiah*; not onely as a *prophet*, but as a *great prince*, possessed of universal dominion. Whereas; the *law of Moses* prophesied of him, onely as a *prophet*, and a *law-giver*; and did not raise such pompous ideas of his dominion and kingdom. Which was one great reason, perhaps, why OUR SAVIOR so readily and frankly discovered himself to be the *messiah*, to the woman of *Samaria*, and her neighbors; and was so reserved, on that head, when he was in *Judæa*. For the owning himself to be such,

^u *Maundrel's travels*, p. 59. 3d edition, 8vo. Oxford, 1714.
ibid. p. 60.

^x *Maundrel*

such, among the *jews*, would have occasioned tumults and insurrections; because of their expectations of a *temporal prince*, to deliver them from the *roman yoke*. Whereas; the *samaritanes*, who looked for him, onely as a *prophet*, and a *law-giver*, were in no great danger of makeing that bad use of such a discovery. Their expecting so great a *prophet*, might arise from their regard to the *law*; and particularly to the celebrated *prophecie* of *Moses*. [Deut. xviii. 5. 15, &c.] But their calling him the *messiah*, [John iv. 25.] seemeth to have risen from his going under that name, so commonly, among the *jews*, who had fled over to the *samaritanes*, in great numbers.

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Even the APOSTLES of OUR LORD (as hath been hinted already) were deeply tinctured with the præjudices of the *jews*, against the *samaritanes*. And, accordingly, JESUS, who was so remarkable for his wisdom and goodnesse, required no more of them than their minds were able to bear. When, therefore, he sent out the twelve, and after them the seventy, upon the first expedition, which was dureing his own personal ministry among them; he commanded them, saying: "Go not into the way of the *gentiles*; neither enter ye into any city of the *samaritanes*." Merely in condescension to the narrow minds of the *jews*, or rather of his own *disciples*, who were all *jews*, did OUR LORD then dispense with their makeing no application to the *samaritanes*: even though *they* were then, in effect, *jews*, by religion; and conformed to the *law* of *Moses*, rather more exactly than the *jews* in *Judæa*, as to every thing but the place of worship. OUR LORD himself, therefore, with great justnesse and propriety, treated them as *jews*; converting the woman of *Samaria*, and several other persons of *Sichar*, or *Sichem*: though both his *disciples*, and the *samaritanes* themselves, were greatly astonished at his so treating them. Before his ascension, he ordered his APOSTLES to plant the *gospel*, first in *Jerusalem*, and *Judæa*, and then in *Samaria*. For, when the *spirit* was poured out, their præjudices would in a great measure vanish. — As the *jews* in *Jerusalem* and *Judæa* had already had the *gospel* preached, for some time, among them; and great numbers had imbraced that doctrine of life; and a persecution had drove some of the *christians* from *Jerusalem* to *Samaria*; the providence of GOD, chose, by that mean, to send the *gospel* among them.

One of the twelve APOSTLES was called *Philip*. But the *Philip* of whom we are going to speak, was not an APOSTLE; but onely an *evangelist*, or an *assistent* to the APOSTLES. Though he knew that

An. Christi ^{34.} that St. *Stephen* had suffered a violent death for his zeale, in spread-
 Tiber. 21. ing and defending *christianity*; yet this *Philip* (the second of the
 Book I. seven *deacons*, when they were elected to that office; since the mar-
 Chap. V. tyrdom of St. *Stephen*, the first of them) imitateing the *proto-mar-*
 Sect. II. *tyr's* zeale, went down to a city of *Samaria*; most probably to *Si-*
 Acts viii. *char*, or *Sichem*, which was then the chief city of *the samaritane*
 5.—8. *sect.* OUR LORD himself had been there, in person, about four
 years before; and many of the *samaritanes* of that city believed on
 him. I am apt to think that *Philip* knew this; and that it was one
 great reason, why he so readily, and without any scruple, preach-
 ed to, and baptized, the *samaritanes*, who were so very odious to
 the *jews*. Though our LORD's expresse order, just before his as-
 cension, was a sufficient warrant for him to have done so. If ma-
 ny of them had seen CHRIST, and believed on him, before *Philip*
 came thither; it is reasonable to think that it would greatly facilitate
 his reception, and promote his succeffe. And the event was an-
 swerable. For the people, almost universally, attended to him;
 diligently hearing him preach *the gospel*; and carefully observing
the miracles, which he worked among them, in confirmation of
 his mission and doctrine. For he healed several persons, who were
lunatic; and the wicked *spirits* are said to have made a loud noise,
 upon their departure out of such as were possessed. He, likewise,
 cured many of lameness, and of the palseie. And (in one word)
 by his excellent doctrine, and many beneficent *miracles*, he caused
 great joy, in that city.

C H A P. V. S E C T. III.

Simon Magus *pretends to be a christian, and is baptized.*

The two APOSTLES, PETER and JOHN, go to Samaria; and confer the gift of the holy spirit, upon the converts, there. Simon Magus would have bought, of them, the power to confer the holy spirit, by the laying on of his hands. They severely reprove him. After which, departing from the city, they preach the gospel in the samaritane villages; and then return to Jerusalem. Acts viii. 9,—25.

TH E R E had been, for some time, and was then, in that city, one Simon, a *magian*;^a whom the people of *Samaria* had, universally, revered. For he pretended that he was a very great and extraordinary person. And they believed him to be so. This character he had raised, not onely by boasting of himself, (as *impostors* commonly do;) but also by sham miracles, and the most art-

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ful

Ver. 9. ^aThe *Magians*, or the *Magi*, were a *sect*, which arose in *Persia*. They abominated *images* (in which they differed from the *Sabians*) and worshiped GOD, onely, by *fire*. They held, that there were *two first principles, or gods*; the one good, and the other evil. The former of which, was, (as they said) the *author of all good*, and represented by *light*; and the other, the *author of all evil*, and represented by *darkness*. And, therefore, they abhorred *darkness*, as we do the *devil*; and worshiped the *good principle, or God*, before *fire*; (for which purpose they had *fire-altars*;) and especially before the *sun*; as being the most perfect fire, and yielding the most perfect light. One of them, who, for some fault that he had committed, had his ears cut off, found means to ascend the throne of *Persia*; as somewhat resembling the true heir, who was actually dead. But he affirmed himself to be the person, still alive. When the *imposture* came to be discovered, multitudes of the *same sect* were destroyed, as well as he. And, from that time, they were called *Magi*, or *Magians*; that is, *cropp-ear'd*: Which name was given them, by way of nick-name, and contempt. After that, the *sect* of the *Magians* lay under the popular odium, for some time; and would have sunk, had it not been revived by *Zoroaster*; who is reckoned to have been a servant to the prophet *Daniel*; and who added several *jewish* rites and customs to their old institutions. By that mean, the *sect* increased again; and spread into *Arabia*, and other countries. And, as *Bar-jesus* is called *Elymas*, Acts xiii. 8. which, in the *Arabic* tongue, signifieth a *magian*; *Grotius* his conjecture is highly probable, that he was a native of *Arabia*.

Dr.

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ful delusions; so that the people, in general, were astonished at his practices, and reckoned him to have been indued with an extraordinary and *divine power*. This regard they had paid to him, for some considerable time; in consequence of his surprizing and deluding them by his magic arts and impostures. But, when many of that city, both men and women, had imbraced *christianity*, and were *baptized*; *Simon* pretended to be a *christian*, too; and was also *baptized*, by *Philip*. From which time, he was generally in *Philip's* company. It is uncertain, whether he was afraid lest *Philip* should draw away the people from him, if he stood out, and opposed him; or hoped to have perfected his *magical skill*, by instructions from *Philip*; as reckoning that *Philip's* *miracles* were onely the effect of a magic, superior to his own. I think it is highly probable, that he was, from the begining, hypocritical and insincere. But, though the APOSTLES, and several of the *primitive christians*, had the gift of discerning the spirits, and secret intentions, of men, in some cases; yet this was not one of the gifts, which they could exercise, at all times; but onely upon certain occasions, according to the pleasure and direction of the spirit. And the *divine wisdom* saw fit that *Simon's* insincerity should be concealed, 'till he himself discovered it. He, indeed, (as well as the people in general) was astonished at beholding the many and unquestionable *miracles*, worked by *Philip*; which far exceeded any of his magical tricks, or any thing else that he had ever seen. But his astonishment was much increased, upon the coming of the two APOSTLES. It deserveth particular notice, that (though several of the *christians* had *spiritual gifts*, and *miraculous powers*; yet) none but APOSTLES could confer, upon others, such gifts and powers. For this reason, when the APOSTLES (who hitherto continued at *Jerusalem*, to consult how they might, in the most effectual manner, spread and confirm the *christian doctrine*) had heard that the *samaritanes*

Dr. *Prideaux* has given a very fine and succinct account of them, and their sentiments; [Vol. I. p. 174, &c. 212, &c. of his *Connection*, &c. 4th edition, 8vo.] and saith, that "some of that sect continue in *Persia* and *India* unto this day." But he is mistaken, in saying, that "the sect of the *magians* was propagated onely in *India* and *Persia*." For they introduced their religion among the tribes of the *Arabs*; as Mr. *Sale* has shown, in his preliminary discourse before *Al-coran*, p. 21. And it would have been a wonder if they had not; considering their great zeale, and the vicinity of *Arabia* to *Persia*.

I make no question but that several of the *magi* pretended to supernatural power, and made use of incantations, or magical arts. And that this *Simon* had practised such unlawful arts, or delusions; as being one of the worst and most wicked of that sect.

*tan*es had, many of them, imbraced the *gospel*; they sent, unto them, two of their own number; namely, PETER and JOHN,^b who were APOSTLES of chief repute, that they might confer upon them *the gift of the holy spirit*. From which, it appeareth very probable, that *the spirit* had been conferred upon all *the christian converts*, hitherto. And, it was highly proper the *samaritanes* should have that *divine gift*; both as a confirmation of the truth of *the christian doctrine*, in general; and, as an evidence to them, in particular, that, (however they had been formerly hated by *the jews*; yet) under the *gospel*, they would be equally acceptable to GOD with the *jews*; and as openly and fully admitted to all the privileges of the church and people of GOD.—It will appear, by what followeth, that *the holy spirit* was conferred, in his supernatural and miraculous influences. For *Simon the magician*, saw some of the wonderous effects of *that divine gift*, immediately, by the new converts speaking languages, which they had never learned; or *propheying*, or *working miracles*. And that was what made him so earnestly covet *that apostolic power*. They who phansy that the APOSTLES conferred those, which have in these later ages, been called the standing, or the sanctifying, influences of *the spirit*, must surely (upon reflection) own, that, supposeing it had been so, such influences could not have been discerned, but gradually, and from the tenor and habit of the life and conversation. And there was not time sufficient, for makeing such exact observations, between the APOSTLES conferring *the gifts*, and *Simon's* offering money to purchase that power. Nor would *that magician*, very probably, have given any thing for any sanctifying influences of *the spirit*, or for *the power* to confer them upon others; supposeing GOD would have bestowed such an extraordinary favor upon him.

I have already observed, “that the APOSTLES (who alone had “this power of imparting them) appear to have conferred some, or “other, of *the miraculous gifts*, upon all adult christians, where-ever
Y 2 “ they

Verse 14. ^b *John* was one of the two, that was for calling down fire, from heaven, upon the *samaritanes*, who would not entertain CHRIST. [Luke ix. 54.] Such a length did his zeal then carry him: but that was a zeal without knowlege. [Probably, his zeal for what he apprehended to be right, was the reason, why JESUS gave him the title of *the son of thunder*.] But, after the *spirit* was poured out, upon him, his mind was enlarged, his zeal guided by knowlege and charity. And then, he makes no scruple of going to the *samaritanes*; imparting unto them *the gift of the holy spirit*; and acknowledgeing them for *christian brethren*, whom his *jewish* zeal would have burnt up, and destroyed.

As the apostles sent *Peter* along with *John*; and he went, accordingly, at their appointment; neither he nor they had any notion of the supremacy of that apostle.

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Acts viii.

An. Christi 34. Tiber. 21. Book I. Chap. V. Sect. III. Acts viii. 15, &c. “ they came: that, upon the APOSTLES themselves, and the rest of “ the hundred and twenty, *the spirit* was poured down, immediately “ from heaven, and without the laying on of the hands of any man: “ and, finally, that upon the other *jewish* converts, the APOSTLES “ laid their hands, and thereby conferred *that divine gift*.” — As *the samaritanes* were now *jews* by religion, and many of them even descended from *jewish* parents; and as OUR LORD himself had during his own personal ministry, treated them as *jews*; there was no occasion for the pouring down of *the holy spirit* upon them, before *baptism*, to prepare the way for their being received into *the christian church*; (as there manifestly was, afterwards, in the case of the first-fruits from among *the gentiles*.) And, on the other hand, suppose *the samaritanes* had not been favored with any *spiritual gifts* and *miraculous powers*; that is, neither before *baptism*, nor after it; they would have come behind other *churches*; and might, thereupon, have been ready to question, whether they, who had been so peculiarly odious to *the jews*, were now accepted of GOD, equally, and to like privileges, with *the jews*, from among whom came the SAVIOR and salvation to mankind. — To *Samaria*, therefore, the two APOSTLES went; most probably, to the city of *Sichar*, or *Sichem*; which (according to *Reland*) was at the distance of forty miles from *Jerusalem*.^c And, as *Moses* of old laid his hands upon *Joshua*, and imparted to him of *the spirit*, which he himself had. [*Deut. xxxiv. 9. Num. xxvii. 18, &c.*] So did the APOSTLES to *the samaritan* converts; at the same time praying, that they might be confirmed in *the faith*, by receiving of *that spirit*, which GOD had given to them. And, when the APOSTLES had laid their hands upon them, those *samaritan* converts, immediately, found themselves possessed of such extraordinary *gifts* and *powers*; though, before that, they had never partook of any thing like them. For *the holy spirit* had not been poured down, upon any of them; neither had there been any APOSTLE there, before the coming of St. PETER and St. JOHN, to confer *that divine gift*, upon them, by the laying on of their hands. They had onely been *baptized*, with water, in the name of the LORD JESUS, as *the messiah* actually come; without this confirming evidence, with which they were now favored.

Thus

Ver. 15. ^c Vid. *Reland. palæstin. sacr.* p. 1007.

Thus (according to the wife and beauteous ſcheme of raiſeing the new creation) the *jewiſh* and *samaritane* *christians* were both treated alike. And how great ſoever their mutual averſion had formerly been, the benign *ſpirit of christianity* laid the foundation, for abating their mutual prejudices; for healing their unhappy differences, and for making them look upon one another, as brethren in CHRIST JESUS, and equally acceptable unto GOD; who is, in *the goſpel*, moſt plainly declared to be the GOD and *father* of all, who believe, and obey, *the christian revelation*; whether *jews*, *samaritanes*, or *gentiles*.

An. Chriſti
34.
Tiber. 21.
Book I.
Chap. V.
Sect. III.
Acts viii.
18, &c.

As the APOSTLES ſeem, generally, to have imparted *the holy ſpirit* to all profeſſed *christians*, where-ever they came, and to ſome who did not prove ſincere; perhaps they imparted ſome *ſpiritual gifts* to *Simon Magus*, among the reſt. But, as the perſons, upon whom ſuch *miraculous gifts* were beſtowed, might either ſtir them up, or quench them, as they were diligent, or careleſſe, in working the works of GOD; ſuppoſeing *that grand impoſtor* had any *ſpiritual gifts* conferred upon him, he immediately and intirely quenched them, by his inſincerity and vile temper, diſcovered in the following propoſeal. For, when he ſaw that the APOSTLES could impart ſuch aſtoniſhing *gifts* and *powers*, by the laying on of their hands; as much preferable to any thing which he had done, as gold is to tinſel; or diamonds to glaſſe, or counterfeit ſtones; and not believing their power to be *divine*, or not duely reflecting upon the nature of ſuch a *divine power*, and the vaſt and kind deſign, in which it was employed: — Without conſidering theſe things, I ſay, he baſely and infamouſly offered to purchaſe that power with money; ſaying: “Such a ſum will I give you, if you will teach me this art; or grant me *the power* of conſering *the holy ſpirit*, upon whomſoever I ſhall lay my hands.” “No! (ſaith St. PETER) your money periſh with you; you inconfiderate, and wicked, wretch! How can you imagine, that *this divine gift* can be purchaſed with money? And that, for ſo vile a purpoſe, as to keep up, or increaſe, the veneration, which the deluded people have formerly had for you? Such a propoſeal is the planeſt indication, that you are unworthy of any *ſpiritual gifts*; and much more of the *power* of communicating them to others. For your heart is not right in the ſight of GOD. Repent, therefore, ſpeedily, and pray to GOD to pardon you; if there be any manner of hopes, that this wicked purpoſe of your heart may be forgiven. For I perceive that you are in a dreadful, and al-

“moſt

An. Christi 34. Tiber. 21. "most desperate state; ^d and have just reason to fear, lest the judgments of GOD should break in upon you suddenly, and destroy you." Then replied *Simon*: "I desire that you would pray, to the LORD, for me, that none of these dreadful things, of which you have spoken, may befall me." St. PETER seemeth to have suspected, that the crime of *Simon Magus* bordered upon the unpardonable sin of *blasphemie of the holy spirit*: Or, however, that there was but little hopes of his repentance and forgiveness.

Book I.
Chap. V.
Sect. III.
Acts viii.
23, &c.

From this crime of *Simon*, a purchaseing the *ministerial function*, with money, or bribes, was called *simony*, in the antient canons of the christian church. But, it is now called so, to procure ecclesiastical benefices, by bribing and corrupting such as have the disposal of them; nor can they, who take such bribes, be wholly clear of all crime.

The two APOSTLES, St. PETER and St. JOHN, haveing preached the word of the LORD, in that city of *Samaria*, and confirmed it, by their own testimony, as well as by imparting the gifts of the holy spirit; they set out, in order to return to *Jerusalem*. But, as they went along, they preached the gospel, in many *samaritane* villages, also. For, it was their common method, to begin with a city; and from thence to spread christianity, through the surrounding country.

C H A P. VI.

Of sending the gospel to Æthiopia, by the conversion of the eunuch. Philip baptizes him; but the holy spirit was poured down upon him, immediately, from heaven. Acts viii. 26, to the end of that chapter.

CHRISTIANITY haveing been planted, according to OUR LORD's expresse order, in *Jerusalem*, *Judæa*, and *Samaria*; it was, in the following manner, sent to *Æthiopia*, one of the uttermost parts of the earth. After the two APOSTLES had left *Samaria*, an angel

Verse 23. ^d The gall of bitterness seemeth to have been an allusion to *Deut. xxix. 18. or xxxii. 32.* and, the bond of iniquity, to *Isa. lviii. 6.*

angel of the LORD was sent, unto *Philip*, with this message: "Make haste, and go southward, unto the road, which leads from *Jerusalem* to *Gaza*; I mean that road, which lies through the desert."^a *Philip* immediately and cheerfully obeyed. And, when he came thither, he found a certain *æthiopian*, an eunuch, a grandee, who was no less than chief treasurer to *Candace*, queen of *Æthiopia*.^b

An. Christi
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Tiber. 21.
Book I.
Chap. VI.
Acts viii.
26, &c.

He was a *profelyte of righteousness* to the *jewish religion*; and, out of his great zele, had gone, that long journey, to worship the true GOD, at *Jerusalem*: perhaps, at the time of *pentecost*, or some other of their public feasts. He was now going back, by way of *Ægypt*, to *Æthiopia*; and was reading aloud, in the *prophecies* of *Isaiab*, as he passed along the road, in his chariot. *Philip*, by a divine impulse, ran towards him. And, when he heard what he was reading, he said: "Do you understand what you now read?" "No (saith he;) how should I understand such *antient prophetic writings*, concerning which I know very little; unless I had some-body, who had some knowlege of such matters, to explaine them to me?" Then he desired *Philip* to come up into the chariot, and explaine the passage to him. The *period of scripture*, which he was then reading, was (according to our present divideing of the *scriptures*) the 53d chapter of *Isaiab*; and particularly the following words: "He was led, as a lamb, to the slaughter; and, as a sheep, before his shearers, is dumb; so he opened not his mouth. In his humiliation, his judgement was taken away [and no right done him;] but

Ver. 26. ^a Vid. *Glossii gram.* p. 190. and *Beza. in loc.* I formerly thought that these words, [which is desert,] had refered to the city of *Gaza*. And that interpretation is contended for, by many learned men; and particularly by *Reland*. [in his *palestin. sacr.* p. 787.] but I am not fully satisfied with what he has said. If there was another road to *Gaza*, it was right to distinguish. But I do not see any reason for informing *Philip*, upon this occasion, that the city of *Gaza* now lay in ruins: as there was no other town of that name, near it.

Ver. 27. ^b *Plinius, de Meroe, l. 6. c. 29.* Regnare fæminam *Candacem*; quod nomen multis jam annis ad reginas transiit. [*Alexander ab Alexandro, Genial. dierum, l. 1. c. 2.*] In *Meroe*, quod *Candaces* præcipua mulier regnum tenuisset, reginas in posterum *Candaces* cognominarunt. [*Euseb. Hist. Eccles. l. 2. c. 1.*] Καὶ αὖτε πάλιν ὑπὸ γυναικὸς τὸ ἔθνος εἰς εἰς νῦν βασιλευμένον. *Dion* and *Strabo*, though they speak, each of them, but of one queen of that name, yet are a farther confirmation of what is here asserted. The words of the former are: Ὑπὸ δὲ τὸν αὐτὸν τέτον χρόνον οἱ αἰθίοπες, οἱ ὑπὲρ αἰγύπτου οἰκόντες, προσεχώρησαν μέχρι τῆς πόλεως τῆς ἐλεφαντίνης ἀνομασμένης, πάντας τὰ ἐν πόσι πορθέοντες, ἡγεμένης σφίσι Κανδάκης. [*Dion. C. de August. p. 526. Edit. Hanoviae, 1606.*] The words of the latter are: Τῶν δὲ ἦσαν οἱ τῆς βασιλίσσης στρατηγὸς τῆς Κανδάκης, ἡ καθ' ἡμᾶς ἦρξε τῶν αἰθίοπων, &c. [*Strab. l. 17. Vid. Wetsten. in loc.*]

Ver. 31. ^c Perhaps the eunuch had been lately brought over to the *jewish religion*; and so was not much acquainted with the national expectation of the MESSIAH, and much less with their *prophecies*.

An. Christi ^{34.} “but who can declare (*the wickedness of*) that generation? For
 Tiber. 21. “his life was taken away, from off the face of the earth.” This
 Book I. was the passage, which *the eunuch* stuck at. And he asked *Philip* :
 Chap. VI. “Can you tell me, concerning whom the *prophet* said this? Did he
 Acts viii. “speak it of himself, or of some other person? I should be glad
 33, &c. “to know who is here meant.” Then *Philip* began to explain it;
 and to show him that it was a *prophecie* concerning the *messiah*, whom
 the *jews* expected. And that it agreed exactly to *JESUS* of *Naza-*
reth; who, in the days of his humiliation, was grievously afflicted;
 but eminently meek and patient, under it all. And (notwithstand-
 ing his innocence, and great benevolence to mankind; as well as the
 clear attestation to his divine mission and doctrine) justice and judg-
 ment were denied him; and he was condemned, as a malefactor, by
 a cruel and wicked generation. But, though they put him to death,
 he was raised again; and, by all his conduct, gave sufficient evidence
 that he was *the great messiah*. To which, *Philip* added, that *his*
kingdom was now going to be erected in the world; and the way of
 entering into it, was by *baptism*. — As they were riding along,
 and conferring thus with one another^d, they came to a place, where the
eunuch observed there was water. Upon which, he said to *Philip* :
 “Look, here is water; why may not I now be initiated into *the chris-*
tian church by *baptism*?” To which, *Philip* replied: “If you sin-
 “cerely believe that doctrine, which I have now taught, there is no-
 “thing to hinder you. You may be *baptized* immediately.” “Yes,
 “(saith the *eunuch*,) I do heartily believe, *what you have now repre-*
sented, as the grand and fundamental article of the christian faith;
 “namely, that *JESUS* of *Nazareth* is *the MESSIAH*; *who is other-*
wise, called the anointed son of GOD, and savior of the world.”
 Then he ordered the chariot to stop. And they both went down
 into the water; and *Philip* baptized him.^e As soon as they were
 come up, from the water, *the holy spirit* fell down upon *the eunuch*,
 immediately from heaven, and without *Philip*’s laying on of his
 hands.^f And (probably) the effusion was attended with *a visible*
glory, like cloven tongues, or pointed flames, of fire. For that *ex-*
ternal

Ver. 36. ^a In one manuscript, the 36th *verse* begins thus: ‘Ὁ δὲ ἐπορεύων, συζητῶντες μετ’ ἀλλήλων. [Vid. Mill. in loc.]

Ver. 38. ^c As to the place, where *Philip* baptized the *eunuch*, see *Fulleri miscel-
 lanea sacra*, l. 2. c. 8. *Pearsonii lectiones in acta apostol.* p. 72. *Relandi palæstin.
 sacr.* p. 487.

Ver. 39. ^f Πνεῦμα ἅγιον ἐπέπεσεν ἐπὶ τὸν εὐνῆχον ἄγγελος δὲ Κυρίου, &c. [*the holy spi-
 rit fell upon the eunuch; but an angel of the LORD caught away Philip, &c.*] is the
 reading

ternal symbol seemeth always to have accompanied the pouring down of *the holy spirit*, immediately from heaven. Though *the eunuch* thereby received some *spiritual gifts*, or *miraculous powers*, or both; yet this effusion of *the spirit* was not in order to præpare the way for his reception into *the christian church*, which was the case with *Cornelius* and his company, who were the *first-fruits* of *the gentiles*. No! then it ought to have been conferred, on him, before *baptism*. Whereas; *the eunuch* was a *profelyte of righteousness*. And, therefore, *Philip* made no scruple of *baptizeing* him, as soon as ever he professed *the christian faith*: as knowing the rule, in that case, [*Exod.* xii. 49.] namely, "One law shall be unto him, who is home-borne, [that is, a *jew*, by birth, as well as religion;] and to the *stranger*, "who sojourns among you:" For so, it plainly appeareth, from the foregoing verse, to be the circumcised profelyte, or *profelyte of righteousness*; and not *the profelyte of the gate*. But, as *Philip* was onely an evangelist; — no APOSTLE at hand; — the *eunuch* going, directly, into a distant country; — and GOD unwilling that he should go, without the extraordinary attestation, which was so commonly afforded to *the christians* of that primitive age; and yet resolved not to break in, upon his common method, which was to communicate *the holy spirit*, by the hands of no man, but of APOSTLES onely: — For these reasons, I say, GOD seems to have poured out *the holy spirit*, upon him, by an immediate effusion. Hereby, this illustrious convert had *the spirit* conferred, in the most honorable manner; and in the way, in which the highest and best *gifts* used to be bestowed. Presently after this signal evidence had been granted to the *eunuch*, an angel of the LORD caught away *Philip*; perhaps by a rapture through the air^s, in the sight of the *eunuch* and his attendents. And, after he was removed beyond their utmost ken, the *eunuch* saw him no more. And he did not search after, or follow, the evangelist. For, as he was satisfied that it was the will of GOD that they should be so separated, he persued his journey to *Æthiopia*; greatly rejoicing at what had happened. For, he was not onely convinced of the truth of *christianity* himself; but he had such *gifts* and *powers*, as

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inabled

reading in the *Alexandrian*, and other *manuscripts*; as well as in some of the *fathers*. [Vid. *Mill.* and *Westen.* in loc. Dr. *Lardner's credibility of the gospel-history*, part 2d, vol. 11. p. 312.] And I take it to be the true and original reading. What confirms this, is, that an angel is represented as appearing, and speaking, to *Philip*, ver. 26.

^s See 1 Kings xviii. 12. 2 Kings ii. 16. Ezek. iii. 14.

An. Christi
34.
Tiber. 21.
Book I.
Chap. VI.
Acts viii.
39, 40.

An. Christi inabled him to instruct and convince others, also. And he is, accordingly, said to have planted the *gospel* in *Æthiopia*.^b

^{34.}
Tiber. 21.

The place, in which *Philip* first appeared, after the *angel* had taken him away from the *eunuch*, was *Azotus*, (the famous *Ashdod*ⁱ of the *Philistines*;) a town, upon the eastern coast of the *Mediterranean sea*; which is computed to have been thirty-four miles from *Gaza*.^k

Book I.

Ch. VII.

Sect. I.

Acts ix.

1, &c.

From thence he passed, through the towns, nigh or upon the sea-coast; and planted the *gospel*, all along, 'till he came to *Cæsarea*; which was then the metropolis of *Palæstine*. There *Philip* settled for some years; very probably for life. For we find, long after this, that *PAUL* and his company lodged at his house, in *Cæsarea*; and that then he had four daughters, virgins, who were *prophetesses*.¹ But, though he settled at *Cæsarea*; we may reasonably presume that *Philip* would continue to preach the *christian doctrine* to the *jews*, and make as many converts among them as he could.

C H A P. VII.

The conversion of SAUL. Acts ix. 1, — 22.

S E C T. I.

SAUL goeth to Damascus, to persecute the christians. In the way, the glory of the LORD appeared to him. He continued, three days, blind, and fasting. Acts ix. 1, — 9.

SAUL, the furious, young *zelote*, who had assisted in the stoning of *St. Stephen*; and who had since been active in persecuting the *christians*, in *Jerusalem*, and *Judæa*; understanding that they had dispersed, and planted *christianity* where they went; he grew excede-

^bEuseb. Ecclef. Hist. l. 2. c. 1. Iren. l. 3. 12. Ipse eunuchus credens, — missus est in regiones *Æthiopiæ*, prædicaturus hoc, quod ipse crediderat. *Cyrill. Hieros. catech.* xviii. p. 294. Philippus docuit *Æthiopem*, et baptizavit; atque in *Æthiopiam* usque Christi præconem misit. *Hieron. in Isai.* c. 53. Eunuchus, — apostolus genti *Æthiopum* missus est. [See Mr. Jortin's remarks on ecclesiastical history, vol. 2. p. 73.]

Ver. 40. ⁱ 1 Sam. vi. 17.

^k Relandi Palæstin. S. p. 608.

¹ Acts xxi. 8, 9.

exceedingly mad against them; and resolved upon persuing them to cities beyond the borders of *Palæstine*.^a

Though the *romans* kept, in their own hands, the power of life and death; yet they allowed the *jewish sanhedrim*, at *Jerusalem*, the power of apprehending, and of scourging in their synagogues, such *jews*, as they thought proper, throughout *Jerusalem* and *Judæa*; and even in other parts of *the roman empire*. Nay; beyond the bounds

of *the empire*, *the synagogues* generally acknowledged the power of *the sanhedrim*, at *Jerusalem*; and were ready to inflict punishments, according to their directions; provided they could get the consent of *the civil magistrates*. SAUL, therefore, breathing nothing but terror and destruction to the poor *christians*, went unto *the high-priest*, as head of the *sanhedrim*;^b to petition for letters of licence and authority, to *the synagogues*, at *Damascus*.

Damascus was a most noble city, at the foot of *mount Libanus*. It had formerly been the capital city of *Syria*,^c and was now very considerable. How much it abounded with *jews*, may partly appear from *Josephus*; who, in one place, taketh notice of the inhabitants shutting up in *the gymnasium*, or place for wrestling and other public exercises; and destroying, ten thousand *jews*, in one hour.^d And he intimateth, that they were afraid their own wives would have hindered such a slaughter; because they were generally devoted to *the jewish religion*. In another place, he represented the *Damascenes*, as having murdered eighteen thousand *jews*, with their wives and children, without any color or pretence for so doing;^e unlesse it was the great calamity, which every where befel *the jews*. A place, which so much abounded with *jews*, was very likely to have some *christians*: as *the christians*, who were dispersed, indeavored to make converts; and none but *jews* had, as yet, been preached to, in order to their imbracing *the christian faith*. Saul, either suspecting, or haveing heard, that some of *the christians*, in their dispersions, had travelled to *Damascus*, petitioned for letters of licence and authority, from *the high-priest*, to search for *christians*, among the *jews*, there; that, if he found any of *that sect*, the *synagogues* might deliver them up to him; that he might carry them in chains to *Jerusalem*, in order to their being punished with imprisonment, scourging, or otherwise; at the pleasure of the *high-priest*, or *the sanhedrim*. Caiaphas was then

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high-

Ver. 1. ^a ἕως καὶ εἰς τὰς ἑξω πόλεις, Acts xxvi. 11. Vid. Relandi Palæstin. sacr. p. 14.

^b Acts xxii. 5. and xxvi. 12.

^c Isa. vii. 8.

^d De Bell. Jud. l. 2. c. 20. § 2.

^e Ibid. l. 7. c. 8. § 7.

An. Christi

35.

Tiber. 22.

Book I.

Ch. VII.

Sect. I.

Acts ix.

An. Christi high-priest. He had procured the death of OUR LORD, and had, once or twice, apprehended the APOSTLES; whom he imprisoned, threatened, and scourged; in order to make them desist from spreading *christianity*. And he was not onely much swayed, by *the sadducees*, in that affair; but he himself had a very great aversion to the *christians*. He, therefore, granted *Saul's* request, with all alacrity; being as willing to have *the whole sect of the christians* extirpated, as *Saul* could be, to ingage in their utter extirpation. Away, therefore, *Saul* goeth, with suteable company, as chief *inquisitor*, upon the merciful and holy errand of *extirpating heretics*. It was about noon, when they came nigh the city *Damascus*. And, as they were upon the road, suddenly there appeared *the shechinah*, or *the glory of the LORD*, far more bright and dazling than the sun in his meridian splendor. And this great light from heaven shone peculiarly round about them. Upon which, they all fell flat upon their faces; [as the prophet *Daniel* had done, upon like occasions.^f] And *Saul* heard a voice, saying, unto him, in the *hebrew* language, "*Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? For such, in effect, is the persecution of my disciples?*" He had his head full of *jewish learning*, and was well acquainted with the notion of *the shechinah*. And, therefore, he soon apprehended this to be *the excellent glory*. But, upon hearing a voice from it, which charged him with *persecution*, he was greatly surprized; and inquired, "Who art thou, LORD; that I should be charged with *persecuteing* thee?" The voice, out of the midst of the glory, replied: "I am JESUS, the *Nazarene*, whom thou persecutest. Thou wilt find it an hard thing to contend with my superior power. For that is, in effect, like kicking against spikes. And, if thou persistest, it will bring certain ruine and destruction upon thine ownself." *Saul* (trembling at this *glorious appearance*, and utterly astonished at being so severely reprimanded, for what he had done out of pure zeale, as thinking it right, and highly praise-worthy;) replied: "LORD, what wilt thou have me do? For I am ready to do whatsoever thou shalt command me." The LORD said unto him; "Arise, and stand upon thy feet. For I have made this glorious appearance unto thee, to show thee thine error. [In as much as I know thee to have done it ignorantly, and in unbelief, rather than out of malice to truth and virtue.] And thou shalt not onely obtain mercy; but thou shalt, also, be constituted a minister, and a witnesse, to the world, both of the things, which thou hast now seen; and of those

“those things, about which I will hereafter appear unto thee. And, though thou shalt meet with many enemies; yet I will either deliver thee from them, or support thee in suffering bravely for my name’s sake. But, go into the city of *Damascus*: and there thou wilt receive farther directions.” His fellow-persecutors, rising again, stood fixed and confounded. For, though they saw not the person, that spoke, they had seen the brightnesse of *the divine glory*, and had been overwhelmed with it’s lustre.^g And they had, also, heard the voice, which spoke; though not so, as to understand what had been said. Perhaps, it appeared to them like the noise of thunder at a distance.^h But, from St. PAUL’s taking such particular notice, that *the voice spoke, unto him, in the hebrew tongue*; ⁱ we may gather that, possibly, his companions might be *hellenistic jews*; who, though they heard the sound of the words, yet did not understand their meaning.^k And it doeth not appear that *Saul* informed them, who it was that made that glorious appearance unto him; or what the voice had said. Very likely, he kept it secret, from every body; at least ’till he had received farther directions, in *Damascus*. SAUL’s companions raising him up, he opened his eyes, and tried to look about him. But he immediately found that the dazzling light of *the divine glory* had struck his bodily eyes quite blind. [As the eyes of his understanding had hitherto been, in the midst of the marvellous light of the *gospel*.] They, therefore, led him, by the hand, into *Damascus*. And so very much affected was he, with *the vision*, and with reflecting upon his own past conduct, that he would neither eat nor drink, for three days;^l that he might humble himself, and testify the greatnesse and sincerity of his repentance; as well as pray for pardon, with greater fervency. And hitherto he continued blind, as well as fasting.

If we compare the prophet *Daniel*’s being affected with some of his *visions*, with this case of *Saul*, we shall find that they bear a great resemblance: — onely *Daniel* had not been guilty of such great crimes; and, consequently, had not occasion for such bitter repentance, as *Saul* had.

C H A P.

Ver. 7. ^g Compare with this Dan. x. 7.

^h John xii. 29.

ⁱ Acts xxvi. 14.

^k Acts xxii. 9. It is said, that they, who were with him, *heard not the voice of him that spoke*; τὴν φωνὴν ἐκ ἡμετέρων, &c. that is, they *understood not* what was said. So [not hearing] is put for [not understanding.] 1 Cor. xiv. 2. For, what we there very justly translate [no man understands him,] is, in the original, εἰς αὐτοῦ [no man beareth him.] And so, in other places of the scriptures.

Verse 9. ^l Compare, with this, *Esther* iv. 16.

An. Christi
35.
Tiber. 22.
Book I.
Ch. VII.
Sect. I.
Acts ix.
6, &c.

C H A P. VII. S E C T. II.

Ananias hath a vision; and Saul, another; of the same kind, and at the same time. Ananias goeth, and cureth him of his blindness. Acts ix. 10,—18.

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10.

ABOUT the end of the three days, (probably at three a-clock in the afternoon; which was the time of the evening-sacrifice, and one of the *jewish* hours of *prayer*) *Saul*, being intense at his devotions, saw, in a vision, a man, whose name was *Ananias*, coming unto him, and laying his hands upon him, and (by the *miraculous power* of healing) conferring upon him his sight. *Ananias* had been a devout man, according to their *law*;^a and in great reputation among *the jews*. Whether he was a native of *Damascus*, where *the jews* were so numerous; and had been converted to *christianity*, upon going up to *Jerusalem*, at some of the *festivals*; or an inhabitant of *Jerusalem*; and driven from thence, by the persecution; — is uncertain. The former appears to be more probable, from what he himself has said, ver. 13. namely, “that he had onely beard, from many others, the mischief, which *Saul* had done to the christians, at *Jerusalem*.” For, if he had been an inhabitant of *Jerusalem*, he would, most likely, have seen and known *Saul*’s outrageous conduct himself.

After the appearance of *the divine glory*, and the voice from heaven, *Saul* went into the city, as the vision had appointed him; and, very likely, took up his lodgings at the house of a *jew*. But, for these three days, he seemeth to have kept himself wholly upon the reserve. He had heard enough, upon the road, to deter him from applying to the *jews*, to assist him, in apprehending the *christians*, or to send them in chains to *Jerusalem*; and he knew too much of their zeal, to declare unto them, as yet, his own conversion. He himself was still too bigoted a *jew*, to think of going among *the gentiles*. And he might very easily suppose, that, if he had applied himself to *the christians*,
and

Verse 10. ^a So he is called, Acts xxii. 12. and I had once infered, from that expression, that he was a *profelyte of righteousness* to the *jewish religion*. But I now believe, that a native *jew* might be called a *devout man according to the law*. And, from *Ananias* his saying unto *Saul*, Acts xxii. 14. “*The God of our fathers hath chosen thee.*” I conclude that *Ananias* was of *jewish* extraction as well as *Saul*.

and acquainted them, with what had happened, they would have looked upon him, onely as a wolf in sheep's cloathing; who made such pretensions, purely to betray them, that he might destroy them the more effectually. Nor were *the christians* ignorant of his setting out, in pursuit of them. For the APOSTLES, who continued at *Jerusalem*, would, no doubt, get all the intelligence they could, of any thing, which concerned *the christians*; and as readily communicate what might be of any service. And, from *Ananias* his words, [ver. 13, 14,] it appeareth, that, within three days after his arrival, *the christians* were acquainted with his character, and the occasion of his coming to *Damascus*. In such a situation, it was most proper, for *Saul*, to conceal what had happened. But the *divine wisdom* made it manifest; and that, in such a manner, as fully convinced *the christians* of the truth and reality of his conversion. Just as St. PETER and *Cornelius* had, afterwards, each of them, a vision, not long after one another, and concerning the same thing. So, towards the end of the three days, and about the very time that *Saul* had the fore-mentioned vision, *Ananias* also had a vision; in which the LORD JESUS CHRIST appeared to him, calling him by his name, "*Ananias*." To which he replied: "LORD, I am here; ready to do whatsoever you shall please to order me." Then the LORD said: "Arise, and go into the street called *straight*, and to the house of one *Judas*. And there inquire for a man, named *Saul*, a native of *Tarsus* in *Cilicia*. For, behold! he is spending his time in prayer, and fasting. And, as he humbleth himself for his past sins; and so earnestly imploreth divine direction; I have, even now, in a vision, represented thee to him, as coming in, and, by putting thine hands upon him, miraculously cureing him of his blindness."

[It ought to be observed, that OUR LORD did not order *Ananias*, to go to him; and, by the laying on of his hands, impart unto him the holy spirit. Which, if he had gone to do, would surely have been the most important part of his message. And, therefore, OUR LORD would not have omitted to mention it. From his silence, therefore, we may draw a good præsumptive argument against that supposition.]

Ananias replied to the order, which JESUS had given him: "LORD, I have heard, from many persons, the character of that very man; and am well informed, how barbarously he has treated several of *the christians*, at *Jerusalem*. And it must needs be unsafe for me, to go nigh him. For he is come hither to *Damascus*, with a commission and authority, from the chief-priests at *Jerusalem*, to apprehend all such, as call upon thy name; and to

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“ carry them, in chains, to the *sanbedrim*, to be punished at their
 “ pleasure.” The LORD JESUS answered again: “ Go thy way ;
 “ notwithstanding his former conduct. For I pity his ignorance, and
 “ mistaken zeale. And, knowing his sincerity, I have not onely par-
 “ doned him ; but I regard him, also, as a chosen vessel, and have
 “ pitched upon him, as the very man, who shall carry my name, or
 “ preach my religion, before *the gentiles*, and before the kings and rul-
 “ ers of the earth, as well as before *the children of Israel*. For I have
 “ appeared unto him, in a glorious form, upon the road. And he
 “ is become a sincere convert. Though, therefore, he hath hitherto
 “ persecuted others, for being *my disciples*, he will persecute no more.
 “ But I will show him, how many, and how great, things, he himself
 “ must suffer, for my name's sake. And yet he will chearfully obey
 “ my orders ; and undauntedly persevere in the work which I shall ap-
 “ point him.” *Ananias*, being now fully convinced that the enemy
 and persecutor was become a *brother-christian*, went presently to the
 house, where he lodged ; and, putting his hands upon *Saul's* eyes,
 he said : “ Brother *Saul*, as secret as you have kept it, I know that
 “ JESUS appeared, in *the cloud of glory*, unto you, as you came along
 “ the road. And that same JESUS hath sent me (as he hath lately re-
 “ presented to you, in a *vision*) that I might *miraculously* cure you of
 “ your blindness, and that you may afterwards be filled with *the holy*
 “ *spirit*. For, the GOD of our great *ancestors*, the *patriarchs*, hath
 “ chosen you ; that you should be fully instructed in *the christian re-*
 “ *velation* ; and that you should yet see that righteous and holy person,
 “ the *messiah* ; and hear the doctrine of the *gospel*, from his own mouth.
 “ For you are to be a *witnesse*, unto all men, both of what you have
 “ heard and seen already, and of what you are hereafter to hear and
 “ see. And now, why do you delay one moment ? Arise, and be *bap-*
 “ *tized*, and wash away your sins ; calling upon the name of the LORD
 “ JESUS, and acknowledge him for the *messiah*, or SAVIOR of the
 “ world.”^b Upon *Ananias* his laying his hands on *Saul's* eyes, and
 speaking thus ; there fell, from his eyes, something like scales ; [a most
 lively emblem of the veil's being done away from his heart^c !] And his
 sight was restored, immediately. Then he rose up, and was *baptized*.
 And, as appears by the event, was then also filled with *the holy spirit* ;
 that is, (as that phrase commonly signifies) *the holy spirit* was poured
 down upon him, immediately from *heaven* ; and not conveyed, by
 the laying on of the hands of any man. And, very probably, that ef-
 fusion

Ver. 17. ^b Acts xxii. 14, 15, 16.Ver. 18. ^c 2 Cor. iii. 14 ; 16.

fusion upon *Saul* was accompanied with a *glory*; cloven tongues, or pointed flames, like as of fire. Which was the *external symbol*, when *the spirit* was given, in the most honorable manner, as well as in the highest measure. And, if *that symbol* attended his receiving *the holy spirit*, it was proper that his eyes should be first opened, that he himself might see the *glory*; and so be convinced, both by *external signs*, and *internal gifts*, that he, who had formerly been a *persecutor*, was now graciously accepted, as a *christian*, and a *prophet*.

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C H A P. VII. S E C T. III.

Some have supposed that Ananias conferred, on Saul, the gift of the holy spirit. The contrary is here asserted, and defended. Acts ix. 17, 18.

IT hath been questioned, whether *Ananias* did not, by the laying on of his hands, both *miraculously* cure *Saul* of his blindness, and impart unto him *the gift of the holy spirit*? I will, therefore, mention what maketh the contrary appear probable to me. (1.) It is evident, as I apprehend, that there is no other clear instance, in the *Acts of the APOSTLES*, or in their *epistles*, of any person's imparting *the holy spirit*, by the laying on of their hands, but *APOSTLES* onely. And, it is certain, *Ananias* was no *APOSTLE*. One would not, therefore, willingly make this an exception, if any other fair account can be given of it; nor ground much upon a singular, and disputed, case. (2.) *The divine wisdom* seemeth studiously to have declined conferring *the holy spirit*, by the hands of any, but *APOSTLES* onely. Thus, though *Philip* was one of the *seven deacons*, whilst *the christians* continued together, at *Jerusalem*; and an *evangelist*; that is, he was equal, if not superior, to *Ananias*; yet he could not impart *the holy spirit* to *the samaritanes*. And, therefore, the *APOSTLES* sent two of their own number, from *Jerusalem*; namely, *PETER* and *JOHN*; "who laid their hands upon them, and imparted unto them *the gift of the holy spirit*." [Acts "viii. 16, 17."] For, before that, *the spirit* was fallen upon none of "them." And, if the reading be genuine, concerning *the holy spirit's* falling down upon the *eunuch*, (as I take it to be;) that will confirm

An. Christi this second observation. (3.) It hath been taken notice of, already, that the order, which *Ananias* received, from OUR LORD, was onely, that "he should go and put his hands upon *Saul*, that he might receive his sight." And, if that was the onely thing, mentioned in *Saul's vision*, and *Ananias* his order; it can hardly be supposed, that a thing so much superior, [as that of *imparting the holy spirit*,] should be intended; when it was not so much as mentioned. Agreeably to this, we find *Saul* himself giving an account of *Ananias* his curing him of his blindness; [*Acts* xxii. 12, 13.] but giving no intimations of his conferring upon him *the holy spirit*.

Some, indeed, may object what is said *ver.* 17. namely, "*Ananias* declared unto *Saul*, that he was sent, by *JESUS*, that he [*Saul*] might receive his sight, and *be filled with the holy spirit*." To which I would answer, That this is the onely text, which can give any color to the supposition of *Ananias* his conferring *the holy spirit* upon *Saul*; and that *ellipses* are so common in *scripture* (as well as in other *antient authors*) that as much must be inserted in many places, as would here make the sense complete. For instance; "*JESUS* hath sent me to restore your sight; that, *when you see again*, you may be filled with *the holy spirit*." That is, his eyes were to be opened, that he might see *the glory*, the external and visible emblem of the shedding down of *the spirit*. And it deserveth some notice (I think) that, even in this, which is the onely place, that can be objected, *Ananias* doeth not say, *I am sent to impart unto you the holy spirit*; [as *St. PAUL* speaketh, *Rom.* i. 11.] but, *that you may be filled with it*; *that is*, he useth the verb passive [*πληθῆς*] and doeth not speak, in the style of one, who could, himself, confer *the gift of the spirit*.

(4.) There are some hints, in *the epistles*, which intimate that *St. PAUL* received *the holy spirit*, immediately from *heaven*. And, what is said, more particularly, *Tit.* iii. 5, 6. appears to me to afford a strong argument for this. For, from *ver.* 3. the whole *section* is mostly a description of *St. PAUL's* own character; and *the shedding down of the holy spirit*, is a circumstance, which could agree to him onely; and not to *Titus*, nor to the *Cretans*. For both *Titus* and *they* had been *St. PAUL's* converts; and had received *the holy spirit*, by the laying on of his hands.* All, who are acquainted with his style and manner, will readily allow that *St. PAUL* doeth often speak of himself, in *the plural number*. And it was, there, a most proper argument, by which to urge them to gentleness and meekness towards

* See on *Titus* iii. 3, 6.

towards such as differed from them; to point out, to them, what a zelote and persecutor he himself had been; and what reason he had seen, for a different temper and conduct, *since the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the holy spirit; which GOD had shed down, upon him, abundantly; by, [or through,] OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST.*

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Gal. i. 12. he intimateth, that it was not, by the medium of any man, that he had received *the gospel-revelation*. And, as if he had designed to præclude any such imagination, he declareth, [ver. 17.] that he did not, upon his conversion, go up to Jerusalem, to them, who were APOSTLES before him. And the christians of that age did (as I apprehend) know very well, that none but APOSTLES could confer *the holy spirit*, by the laying on of their hands; and would, therefore, easily understand St. PAUL as intimating that he had not received *the spirit*, from them; but by an immediate effusion from heaven. For,

(5.) SAUL, upon his conversion, received *the revelation of the scheme of the christian doctrine*, as far as it concerned the jews; and was able to preach, immediately, to them, without any instructions from any man. [Gal. i. 12, — 17.] Whereas; we find no instance of any other person's having such an extensive and honorable revelation, but APOSTLES; who, all of them, received it, by an immediate effusion of *the spirit*. (6.) As Saul was a jew, *the gift of the holy spirit* (according to the method, in all the other instances, mentioned in the new testament) must have been conferred, on him, after baptism. So it was conferred upon all the jewish and samaritane converts; whether it was poured down from heaven, or conveyed by imposition of hands. And in that order it was conferred on the gentile converts; excepting onely the first fruits of them. In which case, it was poured down, from heaven, to point out their right to baptism; which St. PETER and the jewish christians had before scrupled. But, as to Saul, there was no such scruple to be removed. For he was a jew, both by birth and religion. And it plainly appears that Saul was baptized, after Ananias laid his hands upon him, to cure him of his blindness. [Acts ix. 18. and xxii. 13, — 16.] Nor is it, any where, so much as intimated, that Ananias did, upon any account, lay his hands, a second time, on Saul. Accordingly; [Tit. iii. 5, 6.] after baptism, or the washing of regeneration, he intimateth that *the holy spirit* was poured out, upon him. (7. and lastly.) Saul was not a whit behind any of the prophets, after he became a christian, and a prophet; any more

An. Christi 35. Tiber. 22. Book I. Ch. VII. Sect. III. Acts ix. 17, 18. than behind any other of the APOSTLES, after he became an APOSTLE. And, would it not be unaccountable, that *the holy spirit* should be poured down, upon *the eunuch*; and that GOD would not enable Philip to confer, upon him, that *divine gift*, by *the laying on of his hands*; merely because Philip was not an APOSTLE; and yet he was an evangelist; and, upon every account, onely second to an APOSTLE; and *the eunuch* (in many respects) onely a common convert. — Would not this be unaccountable, I say, upon the supposition that Ananias (who was, at the highest, onely equal to Philip; and, very probably, inferior to him) was enabled to confer *the holy spirit* upon *the most signal convert, prophet, and APOSTLE, in the christian church*? Or (to take a more unexceptionable instance) would Philip the evangelist, have been denied the honor of conferring *the spirit*, upon *the samaritanes*; and yet Ananias (who is never dignified with the title of an evangelist) have been permitted to confer that *divine gift*, upon one who was greater than any of *the samaritanes*? Or, finally, would not his violent and implacable enemies have objected it, to Saul, if Ananias had conferred upon him the gift of *the holy spirit*; when they condescended to much lower scandal; not onely chargeing him with being an APOSTLE of men, and learning christianity of the other APOSTLES; but basely insulted him, because *his bodily presence was mean, and his speech contemptible*? St. PAUL was not onely equal to, but honored above, all the APOSTLES. And, in every respect, excepting his late conversion, appears to have had the preference.

For these, and like reasons, I think that Ananias did not impart, unto Saul, the gift of *the holy spirit*, by *the laying on of his hands*: though I leave others to judge of this matter, as it appears most reasonable to them.

C H A P. VII. S E C T. IV.

The spiritual gifts and miraculous powers conferred on Saul, immediately after baptism. Acts ix. 18.

AS soon as Saul was baptized, the holy spirit (as I apprehend) was poured down, from heaven, upon him, accompanied with a glory; which was called cloven tongues, or pointed flames, like as of fire: Such as accompanied the giving of the spirit, to the other APOSTLES, upon the illustrious day of pentecost; and such as, very probably, always accompanied an immediate effusion from heaven. What gifts and powers were hereby conferred on Saul, deserveth to be inquired. But we have so few, and such imperfect, hints, that we cannot speak positively and expressly; at least as to all of them. It doeth, indeed, evidently appear, that some gifts and powers he did receive. For, St. LUKE saith, ver. 20. that he immediately preached the christian doctrine, in the jewish synagogues, at Damascus. And he himself saith, [Gal. i. 11, &c.] “that the gospel, which he did preach, he neither received, from any man; neither was he taught it, by any man; but by revelation from OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST. “For, when he, who was formerly a zealous pharisee, had the gospel revealed to him; [that, in due time, he might be the APOSTLE of the gentiles,] he did not consult with flesh and blood: that is, he applied to no man for advice and instruction; neither went he up to Jerusalem, unto them, who were APOSTLES before him, to learn the christian doctrine of them. But he went, (I suppose, by a divine order,) and preached the gospel in Arabia. And then returned; and preached it, again, in Damascus.” Nay; for three years after his conversion, he had never seen any of the APOSTLES. And when, at the end of three years, he went up to Jerusalem, he saw none of them, except PETER and JAMES. And with them he tarried onely fifteen days. Which would have been too short a time to have learned the whole scheme of the christian doctrine, if he had been then to have learned it. But he understood it, as well as St. PETER, or any other of the APOSTLES: [who, in conferring about it, could add nothing to his knowlege.] And, therefore, he went out again, and preached it in Syria and Cilicia. From all which, we are

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An. Christi are planely directed to fix this, for the time of Saul's receiveing several of his *spiritual gifts*, and *miraculous powers*.

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And, from what hath been said, it appeareth: 1. That he must now have received *the word of wisdom*; that is, (as it has been defined above,) "a full and clear knowlege of *the scheme of the christian doctrine* : At least, that general part, which was common to all mankind; and that particular part, which might be, more peculiarly, called *the jewish gospel*." There is, indeed, no reason to think, that he had, as yet, any notion of *preaching to the gentiles*; or any *revelation*, communicated to him, of that *gospel*, which more peculiarly concerned them. For St. PETER had not yet *opened the door of faith* to them, or led the way to their conversion. And, 'till he had, by *divine direction*, led the way, no body præsumed to convert any *gentiles*. It was well, if they afterwards got over their præjudices, and communicated the *gospel* unto *the uncircumcised*.

By *this word of wisdom*, Saul had more knowlege communicated, in one hour, than ever he could have attained, by sitting at the feet of Gamaliel. His former aversion to *christianity* was now dissipated. And he, with astonishment, saw what a glorious plan GOD had contrived, for erecting a *spiritual kingdom* : — much superior to the plan, which was shown to Moses, in the mount, when he was about to erect GOD's *temporal kingdom* over the jews.

In order to preach *christianity*, which was founded upon facts, Saul must have had the knowlege of CHRIST's life, ministry, death, resurrection, and ascension, communicated unto him; all which, I suppose, were made known, to him, by *immediate revelation*.^a

If

^a It may appear strange, to some, that Saul should have had *facts* communicated, unto him, by *revelation*; when he might have been informed of them, by the APOSTLES, who were present, when they were done, and eye-witnesses of them. But, notwithstanding all this, it appeareth to me highly probable (not to say evident) that such facts were actually reveled to him. [1 Cor. xi. 23, &c] It is his own account: "I have received, of the LORD, the manner, in which the LORD JESUS first instituted his last supper," &c. And so he speaks of the *facts* of CHRIST's death, and resurrection. [1 Cor. xv. 3, &c.] He, again, declareth, [Gal. i. 11, 12.] "that *the gospel*, which he preached, was not according to man, neither did he receive it of man; nor was he taught it, but by *the revelation* of JESUS CHRIST." [Ver. 17, 18.] He went directly, into Arabia, upon his conversion; and preached the *gospel*; and saw none of the APOSTLES, for three years. And, [chap. ii. 6.] when he did see them, the chief of the APOSTLES could add nothing to his *former knowlege*. I am ready to question, whether St. LUKE might not have his knowlege of *these facts* from St. PAUL. It is, indeed, commonly supposed, that he learned his

If any should object, "that he was not now made an APOSTLE, but onely a christian prophet; and, that the word of wisdom, or the having a comprehensive view of the christian doctrine, communicated, by immediate revelation, was peculiar to APOSTLES; — and should, from thence, infer, that Saul could not now receive this gift; but must rather have received it, several years after this, when he was taken up into heaven, and made an APOSTLE." I answer, that this objection made me hesitate a long time; and rather incline to fix his having the word of wisdom communicated to him, when he became an APOSTLE. But finding St. LUKE assert that he preached, soon after his conversion; and Saul himself declareing, that what he then preached, he "received, not of men, neither by man, but by the revelation of JESUS CHRIST;" I think it fixed, both by the evangelist and APOSTLE, to this very time, where I now place it. Though I look upon this, as the onely instance, of any person, but an APOSTLE's, having the word of wisdom; and that it was now granted to Saul, merely with a view to his being afterwards an APOSTLE. When he was made an APOSTLE, it was to the gentiles. But that was some years after this. For, had he been, immediately upon his conversion, sent out, as APOSTLE of the gentiles; it would not onely violently have contradicted all his own præjudices: [which would have been contrary to OUR LORD's usual method, of letting light into men's minds, as they were able to bear it:] but it would have made the generality of the jewish christians to have looked upon him, as no christian: nay; as their grand enemy; who onely pretended to christianity, and preached it, among the gentiles, to perplex them, and oppose the real interest of the gospel of CHRIST. Whereas; if we narrowly observe, how amazingly GOD condescended to their most grosse and unaccountable præjudices; and with what a wise and gentle hand

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his gospel from such as had been eye-witnesses. But St. LUKE doeth not say so himself. He saith, "that many had taken in hand to write accounts; as they, who had been eye-witnesses, and ministers of the word, had informed them. And, that it seemed good to him also to write; as he had had a perfect information of every thing from the first." [Luke i. 2, 3.] But he doeth not say, "that he had all his information from eye-witnesses." And, just so, do some of the antients speak. Jerome [de Vir. illustr. c. 7.] saith: "LUKE learned his gospel, not onely of PAUL, who had not conversed with OUR LORD, in the flesh; but of the other APOSTLES." Irenæus [as quoted by Eusebius, Eccl. hist. l. 5. c. 8.] saith, that "LUKE, the companion of PAUL, hath wrote, in a book, the gospel, which was preached by him;" that is, by PAUL. See, also, Iren. adv. hæres. l. 3. c. 1. And Tertullian [adv. Marcion. l. 4. c. 5.] hath informed us, "that LUKE's history was usually ascribed to PAUL. For those things may be looked upon, as the master's, which the disciples have published."

An. Christi hand he rooted them out; particularly, with what easie steps, and by
 35. what just and gentle degrees, he ordered the several removes and ad-
 Tiber. 22. vances of *the gospel-light*; — we shall applaud and admire the method,
 Book I. which was taken, as the wisest and most effectual that can be conceiv-
 Ch. VII. ed. It is true, I have included, under *the word of wisdom, the revela-*
 Sect. IV. *tion of divers mysteries; or of the grand events, relateing to the spreading,*
 Acts ix. *corrupting, and restoreing, of the christian religion.* But this I do not
 18. suppose Saul to have received, 'till he was made an APOSTLE. And, it is remarkable, that, even to the APOSTLES of *the circumcision*, such *mysteries* were not discovered, all at once; and to few, if any, of them, so early as the former branches of *the word of wisdom*.

2. By this effusion of *the spirit*, Saul must have received *the word of knowlege*; that is, “a full and comprehensive view of the scope and design of *the law* and *the prophets*; and a thorough understanding of “the confirmation, which *the old testament* giveth to *christianity*.” It is true, Saul had had a learned education. And, therefore, was (very probably) acquainted with *the original language* of the old testament, as well as with the most antient of *the chaldee paraphrases*.^b And, upon such accounts, some may think that he had much lesse occasion for being let into the meaning of those antient writings, by *revelation*: — lesse occasion, I mean, than the other APOSTLES; who were, most, or all, of them, *unlearned* men. But then, if we consider how much more he must have been established, in his præjudices, against the just interpretation of *the prophecies*, and the scope and design of the successive *revelations*; we shall be ready to acknowledge, that there must have been as much, or more, reason, for GOD's communicateing unto him *the word of knowlege*; before he sent him out to preach *christianity* among *the jews*. The *gospel-doctrine* was, indeed, to be founded upon *facts*. And, for that reason, I have supposed that the *facts* of CHRIST's life, sufferings, and resurrection, were reveled to Saul, in a full, clear, and distinct, manner; as well as *the scheme of the christian doctrine*. But, when he had asserted the *facts*, and built the *doctrine* upon them; it was requisite, in order to his preaching successfully among *the jews*, that he should lead them into a right interpretation of *the law* and *the prophets*; and thereby remove the scruples of the honest, and convince gainsayers. It will not be so much wondered,

^b For a large and particular account of the chaldee paraphrases, and of the time when, and the persons, by whom, they were written; see *Prideaux his connection*, &c. vol. 2. p. 531, &c. 8vo. 4th edition, 1718.

ed, that *Saul* should have *this gift*, if he had the former. For this latter gift was not peculiar to the APOSTLES. Some of the superior prophets, also, had it. And *Saul* ought, from the time of his embracing the gospel, to be reckoned among the superior christian prophets.

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3. Possibly, he might now receive the gift of discerning spirits: because that gift was granted, not onely to the superior, but oftentimes (I believe) even to the inferior, prophets. What the gift was, hath been already shown at large. But, as we have no particular proof of *Saul's* receiveing it, at this time, we shall passe on, without saying any more about it.

4. In order to have preached the gospel to the jews, he must have had the power of binding and looseing; so far as that relates to "the pointing out to them their duty, and their being bound over to, or freed from, future punishments, upon their neglecting, or practising, it." But that he should, as yet, be capable of freeing them from the observation of the ceremonial law; or of miraculously inflicting bodily punishments upon them, when incorrigible; and as miraculously releaseing them, when penitent; — is, what I cannot believe. For these things appear to me to have been peculiar to APOSTLES; and *Saul* was not an APOSTLE, 'till many years after this.

5. SAUL, very probably, did now receive the gift of prophesying; both as it signified "the foretelling some future contingent events; and as it included the praying, singing, or makeing discourses upon particular occasions, by immediate inspiration." This was so commonly granted, even to the inferior prophets; and the latter branches of it so necessary, for carrying on of religious worship, in the christian assemblies; that I can hardly think GOD would suffer *Saul* to go into *Arabia*, to preach the gospel, and plant churches, without it.

6. Perhaps, *Saul* now received the the gift of tongues. — In the jewish synagogue, at *Damascus*, and in *Arabia*, he could (I think) have no very great occasion for more languages than he had learned; either at *Tarsus*, or in *Jerusalem*. But this gift was so commonly bestowed, upon the effusion of the spirit, and even upon inferior prophets, that it is not unlikely *Saul* might now have it. For, besides it's being conferred upon the APOSTLES; [Acts ii. 6, 7, 8; 11.] it was, probaly, conferred on the samaritanes, [Acts viii. 17.] and on the eunuch. [ver. 39.] It was most evidently conferred, when the spirit was first poured out, upon the gentiles: [Acts x. 44, 45, 46,]

An. Christi and upon the twelve disciples of *John the baptist*, on whom St. PAUL
 Tiber. 22. ^{35.} laid his hands. [*Acts* xix. 6.] And a great part of *the christians*,
 Book I. in *the church* of *Corinth*, seem to have had it. [*1 Cor.* xiv. 2,
 Ch. VII. &c.]

18. Sect. IV. 7. The interpretation of tongues was, also, frequently granted to
inferior prophets. And, therefore, we may præsume that it would
 not be denied to *Saul*; who was so eminent a convert, and *prophet*.
 Hereby, he could turn into the languages of the countries (where-
 ever he preached *christianity*) any part of the old testament, after he
 had recited it in *the original*. And, it is possible, that it might be of
 service to him, upon some other accounts, in the planting, or water-
 ing, of the *christian churches*.

As to *the miraculous powers* now conferred on *Saul*. He had, most
 likely, (1) A greater degree of *fortitude*, to run hazards, or actual-
 ly suffer, for the truth, than he had before his *conversion*; though not
 equal to what he received, when he became an APOSTLE. (2.) It is
 highly probable that he now received *the power of healing diseases*,
 and doing other *miracles*; to raise the attention of *the jews*, and to
 confirm *the doctrine* which he preached. Several of *the inferior pro-
 phets* had this power. And, therefore, *Saul* cannot reasonably be sup-
 posed to have been destitute of it.

As to *the apostolic rod*, or *the power* of imparting *the holy spirit* unto
 others, by the laying on of his hands; I am satisfied that *Saul* had
 them not, 'till he became an APOSTLE. All the *gifts* and *powers*,
 which I suppose him now to have received, were onely such, as were
 necessary to his own understanding *the christian doctrine*; to his being
 fully convinced of it's truth and divinity; and to his preaching it,
 among *the jews*, with certainty, and with succeſſe.

C H A P. VII. S E C T. V.

SAUL breaketh his long fast; associateth himself with the christians; preacheth CHRIST, in the synagogue of the jews, to their great astonishment; was set up, as a monument of mercy, to encourage other sinners to repent, and embrace christianity. Acts ix. 19, — 22.

SAUL, having been cured of his blindness, baptized, and filled with the holy spirit, he ended his long fast. And, after eating, he found himself much refreshed. And well he might; considering his late happy change; and the great mercy, which GOD had shown him; as well as the honor done him, in so eminently qualifying him for a christian prophet. And, now, he no longer made a secret of his conversion; but associated himself with the christians, at Damascus. For, we may reasonably suppose that Ananias had informed them of what had happened; and fully convinced them that he was a real, and sincere, convert. As such, therefore, they received him. And, among them, did he freely converse, for several days. — Being converted to christianity, and extraordinarily qualified, as hath been above related; there was a strange alteration in his conduct. For, instead of apprehending the christians, beating them in the synagogues, or carrying them, in chains, to Jerusalem; he himself went into several of the synagogues, at Damascus: (where, as hath been observed, the jews were very numerous; and consequently had, very likely, many synagogues there^a.) And he publicly preached, in the name of JESUS^b of Nazareth; asserting and proving him to be the promised, and long expected, messiah. The jews seem to have known nothing, 'till then, of his conversion. And, therefore, this sudden and strange turn amazed them all. “What! (said they to one another) Is Saul, B b 2 “also,

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19, &c.

Ver. 20. ^a That the jews used to have more synagogues than one, in a city, vid. Vitring. de vet. synag. p. 255, &c. They now have three in London.

^b Instead of the word [CHRIST,] several antient mss. versions, and fathers, read [JESUS.] Which reading was approved of, by Grotius, Dr. Mill, and Bengelius. [Vid. Wetsten. in loc.]

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“ *also, among the prophets?* ” Is not this the very man, who fiercely persecuted such as invoked this name, at *Jerusalem*? And was it not his errand to this city, to apprehend *the christians*, and carry them bound to *Jerusalem*, to *the chief-priests*, that they might punish them, at their pleasure? What can have befallen this man? How astonishing is his conduct? Let them think, or say, what they would, *Saul* was still the more confirmed; confuteing such of *the jews*, at *Damascus*, as opposed *the christian doctrine*: with the zeale of a new convert, contending for the truth of *the christian religion*, and endeavoring to persuade and convince as many as he could. As he had blasphemed CHRIST, and persecuted *the christians*, through ignorance, and whilest he really disbelieved *the gospel*; he more easily obtained mercy, at the hands of OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST. But, though OUR LORD forgave him, he could hardly forgive himself; and thought he could not sufficiently testifie his love and affection, without the greatest study and diligence to convert others. And, indeed, by showing mercy to him, who had been (as he calleth himself) *a blasphemer, and a persecutor*; OUR LORD gave a most remarkable instance of his long-suffering, patience, and abundant mercy. And in showing mercy to him, who was *the first*, that from a blasphemer and persecutor, became *a christian*, the blessed JESUS afforded a most signal pattern unto them, who should afterwards believe, on him, unto eternal life. [See on 1 Tim. i. 15, 16. 2d edition.] For what could be a greater encouragement unto others, to hope for mercy, upon their repentance, and imbraceing *the gospel*? To *the jews*, for instance, who had procured the murder of *the messiah*, the LORD of life and glory? To *the samaritanes*, who had formerly been so odious to *the jews*, and corruptors of the old testament? To *the devout gentiles*; with whom *the jews* would not eat, nor freely converse; as long as they remained *uncircumcised*? And, finally, and above all, unto *the idolatrous gentiles*; who had a long time lived, without *the true GOD* in the world, and as aliens to his church and covenant: unto whom, more peculiarly, this *Saul*, this singular monument of mercy, was, in due time, to be an APOSTLE?

SAUL’S stay at *Damascus*, at this time, was but short. For, in a little while, he went to *Arabia*, and preached the *gospel* unto *the jews* there.

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Verse 21. “ 1 Sam. x. 11, 12. This was a proverbial expression among *the jews*, when any thing strange, or unexpected, happened. It was literally applicable, in the present case.

C H A P. VIII.

Some particulars, from the jewish and roman history, which concerned the christians. For instance; the government of Rome changed from a commonwealth to a monarchy. Under Augustus, the 2d. of the roman emperors, JESUS was borne: under Tiberius, the 3d. of them, he was crucified. How, and when, Judæa became subject to the romans. The form of the government in Judæa changed. Pontius Pilate deposed and banished. Caiaphas, the high-priest, deposed. A war between Herod Antipas and Aretas, king of Arabia. Caligula succedes Tiberius, as emperor of Rome. A brief account of Josephus, the jewish historian.

BEFORE we procede to relate *Saul's* going into *Arabia*, to plant the *gospel* there; it will be proper to take notice of some things, from the *jewish and roman history*, which happened about this time; and which may give some light to the *christian history*.

The *roman empire*, being extended over the greatest part of the then known world, was secure from outward force. But it fell by it's own power; and received it's mortal wound, from the venality and corruption of the people; the ambition of the leading men; and the civil discords, which arose from thence. It was the *fourth kingdom*, in the *prophecie* of *Daniel*; and flourished, while it was a *commonwealth*. But it was now reduced, from a *commonwealth* to a *monarchy*. For *Pompey*, *Crassus*, and *Julius Cæsar*, three of the greatest men in *Rome*, had agreed to support one another, and to divide the power of the *empire* among themselves. As long as *Crassus* lived, he balanced the matter between the other two. But, when he died, neither of them could be content with lesse than the whole. For *Pompey* could not bear an equal, nor *Cæsar* a superior. And, therefore, they raised a civil war, in which *Cæsar* got the better. He was a man of infinite ambition, and the most artful addresse. And had,
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by his valor abroad, and by his boundlesse generosity and insinuateing arts at home, gained the good-will of almost all sorts of men. He first aspired to *the consular dignity*, and then to *the dictatorship*, or supreme power; in which he was fixed, after the defeat of *Pompey*, his son in law, who had opposed him, with the like ambitious and aspiring views. But *Cæsar* did not long enjoy the supreme power. For, after three years and an half, some of the leading men, among the *romans*, who resented his inflaveing a free people; or some of them, perhaps, as ambitious to have the supreme power, themselves; stabbed him publicly, in the *senate-house*.^a

Octavius Cæsar, who was afterwards called *Augustus*, succeeded him in the *empire*. He was the son of *Atia*, or *Attia*, which *Attia* was the daughter of *Balbus* and of *Julia*, sister to *Julius Cæsar*;^b and *Julius* had, by his will, made him his adopted Son. After various struggles and contests, more particularly with *Marc Antony*, he obtained the supreme power; which he held, for above forty years. And, in the main, behaved like a good prince; considering the absolute power, of which he was possessed; and the great corruption and wickedness of the times. In the reign of *Augustus*, was JESUS CHRIST borne, at *Bethlehem*, in the land of *Judæa*.

Augustus was succeeded by *Tiberius*; in whose reign, CHRIST was crucified, and his religion began to be planted in the world. The emperor, *Tiberius*, was the son of *Tiberius Nero*, and of *Livia*. *Augustus Cæsar* took *Livia*, from her former husband, when she was big with child, and married her. And *Caius* and *Lucius*, the grandsons of *Augustus*, dying; he adopted *Livia's* son, *Tiberius*; and *Agrippa*, their brother; in their stead. About three years before his own death, he took in *Tiberius*, as co-partner in the *empire*. And (after his death) he succeeded to *the whole empire*. — *Tiberius* was a prince of a suspicious temper, and savage disposition; exceedingly devoted to all manner of vice and debauchery.^c Before *Augustus* his death was published, he procured the death of *Agrippa*. And he concealed his inclinations, in the begining of his reign, for fear of *Germanicus*, his brother's son, who was præsumptive heir to the *empire*.^d For, when *Augustus* was about to adopt *Tiberius*, he ordered him to adopt *Germanicus*. Now *Germanicus* was a man of great valor, and distinguished virtue; much fitter for the empire than *Tiberius*. Of him, therefore, the people

^a Joseph. de bell. jud. l. i. c. ii. §. i. & Antiq. l. 14. c. ii. §. i. Josephus very justly reckons the begining of *Cæsar's* government, from his second dictatorship. [Aldrich. & Usher. in Joseph. in loc. edit. Havercamp.]

^b Sueton. in August. §. 4. ^c Dion. Cass. l. 57, 58. ^d Sueton. in Tiber. c. 25.

people of *Rome* were excedeing fond; which made *Tiberius* both en-
vy, and fear, him. But, when he had got him taken off, he threw
off the mask; and discovered his temper, by many acts of cruelty and
debauchery.^e

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Judæa became subject to the *romans*, but a little before the *roman*
government was reduced from a *commonwealth* to a *monarchy*. The
occasion of which, was, a quarrel in the *Asmonæan* family. For, af-
ter the death of *queen Alexandra*, (who, by gratifying the *pharisees*,
had governed *that kingdom* peaceably, nine years; *that is*, from the
death of her husband, to the end of her own life;) her eldest son,
Hyrchanus, who was of an indolent and peaceable temper, succeeded
to the crown. But, after he had injoyed it, onely three months, *Aris-
tobulus*, his younger brother, wrested it from him.^f However; the
contest did not end there, but was improved, by *Antipater*, the *I-
dumæan*, the father of *Herod the great*, to raise new disturbances and
commotions among the *jews*.^g The father of *Antipater* had been
advanced to the government of *Idumæa*, by *Alexander Jannæus*,
the late king of the *jews*. And *Antipater* himself, haveing been
bred up, in the court of *Alexander Jannæus*, and of *queen Alexandra*,
had curried favor with *Hyrchanus*, in hopes of being advanced by him,
when he should come to the crown. When, therefore, *Hyrchanus*
was deposed, *Antipater* incited him first to apply to *Aretas*, king of
Arabia, to restore him to the kingdom;^h and afterwards to the *ro-
mans*, to whose decision *Aristobulus* at first agreed to refer the mat-
ter. But, when they had both pleaded their cause, before *Pompey*, who
was then at *Damascus*; and *Pompey* seemed inclined to decide in favor
of *Hyrchanus*; *Aristobulus* retired, and put *Judæa* in a posture of defence.
Which so incensed *Pompey*, that, haveing *Aristobulus* in his hands, he
laid him in chains; and then besieged *Jerusalem*.ⁱ And, after the
gates of the city were opened to him, by *Hyrchanus* his party, he laid
siege to the temple, whither the other party had retired. And, after
three months, he took it, and the castle *Baris*; which was afterwards
called the tower of *Antonia*.^k And, haveing put to death the heads
of *Aristobulus* his faction, and demolished the walls of *Jerusalem*, he
made *Hyrchanus* both high-priest, and prince, of the *jews*. But he re-
duced

^e Idem, ibid. c. 52. &c.

^f Joseph. Antiq. Jud. l. 15. c. 6. § 4.

^g Joseph. ubi supra, l. 14. c. 1. § 2, 3.

^h Joseph. de Bell. Jud. l. 1. c. 6. § 2.

ⁱ Id. ibid. c. 3, 4.

^k Hist. Taciti, l. 5. c. 9.

Lucius Florus, l. 3. c. 5. Joseph.

Antiq. l. 14. c. 4. § 3.

An. Christi 35. Tiber. 22. deduced his dominions to narrower bounds, and made *the kingdom tributary to the romans*.¹

Book I. Ch. VIII. Acts ix. 22. *Antipater*, being an active and sagacious man, did afterwards greatly ingratiate himself with *Julius Cæsar*, by doing him many kind offices; and, particularly, by assisting him to carry on the war, in the neighboring provinces. Upon which, he was made *procurator* of *Judæa*, under *Hyrchanus*; with leave to rebuild the ruined walls of *Jerusalem*. And he got two of his sons preferred; that is, *Phasael*, the eldest, to be governor of the city *Jerusalem*; and *Herod*, his second son, to be governor of *Galilee*.^m *Antipater* was, after some time, poisoned, by one *Malichus*, a rival, who envied his power and greatness;ⁿ and *Phasael*, his eldest son, being taken and imprisoned by an enemy, beat out his own brains, in the prison.^o But the other son, *Herod*, was a young man of a great genius, and an aspiring temper; and was indefatigable in his attempts to please and oblige *the romans*. By their interest, he was made *king of Judæa*, to the exclusion of *the Asmonæan family*. This was *Herod the great*; who arose to vast power, and reigned above thirty years. He was a most jealous and cruel tyrant. And, at last, fell into such a loathsome disease, and most cruciateing torments, that he endeavored to kill himself; but was restrained by his friends. However; after long and grievous sufferings, he died a most miserable death. It was he, who was *king of Judæa*, when OUR SAVIOR was borne; and who murdered the infants at *Bethlehem*, in order to have cut off OUR LORD: of whom he was jealous, as he appeared under the character of the *king of the jews*. After *Herod the great*, his son *Archelaus* reigned, about ten years, over *Judæa* and *Samaria*. And was then, by *the romans*, deposed and banished, for the many and tyrannical actions, of which he had been guilty, during his government.^p From that time, *Judæa* and *Samaria* were made a *roman province*; with this particular circumstance, that they were to be a branch of the province of *Syria*.^q But, that they might be kept in good order, there was an officer, sent by *Augustus*, to reside and govern there; invested with the power of life

¹ Joseph. de Bell. l. i. c. 7. § 6, 7. & Antiq. Jud. l. 14. c. 4. § 4, 5. c. 5. § 2.
^m Joseph. Antiq. Jud. l. 14. c. 8, 9.
ⁿ Joseph. de Bell. Jud. l. 11. § 4. & Antiq. l. 14. c. 11. § 1.
^o Joseph. de Bell. Jud. l. i. c. 13, *ver. fin.* & Antiq. l. 14. c. 13, *ad fin.*
^p Id. ibid. l. 17. c. 13. § 2.
^q Joseph. de Bell. Jud. l. 2. c. 8. § 1. & Antiq. l. 17. c. ult. § ult. & l. 18. c. 1. § 1.

life and death. *Pontius Pilate* is reckoned to have been the fifth in succession.^r He was *procurator*, when OUR BLESSED LORD was crucified; and had tamely submitted to let *the jews* murder that holy and innocent person. For he had been guilty of great cruelties, and many irregularities, in the foregoing part of his government; and was afraid of disobliging *the jews*, lest they should accuse him of male-administration before *Cæsar*; and so get him deposed, or punished.^f It hath been observed, in the course of *this history*, that *Pilate* is not once mentioned, as interposing, or calling *the jews* to an account, for their irregular proceedings against *the christians*. No! when he had, contrary to what he more than once declared to be his own judgment, condemned *JESUS*, at their importunity; *the jews* had gained a point; and would scarce condescend to ask him for leave to persecute the disciples of *JESUS*. But, though he winked at the riots of the people, and the irregular proceedings of *the sanhedrim*; or sometimes, perhaps, gratified them, by secretly joining with them; yet all this did not procure him the favor of the people; nor screen him from the accusations, which he justly feared. For he was deposed this year, (according to the best accounts) some time before the *passover*. The more immediate occasion of which, was, as follows. An *impostor*, among *the samaritanes*, having made himself popular, ordered the people to meet together, and go with him, up to *mount Gerizim*, which they esteemed the most holy of all mountains; at the top of which, he assured them, he would show them sacred vessels, that had been hid, there, by the hands of *MOSES*. They, being too credulous, believed him. And, having armed, and posted themselves in a village called *Tirathaba*, they there received all that would join them; designing to ascend the mountain, in a very large body. *Pilate* had got notice of their intention, and intercepted their passage, both with horse and foot; who fell upon *the samaritanes*, at the village; killing some, dispersing others, and taking many others prisoners. The chief of whom, *Pilate* put to death. Upon this, *the senate*, or chiefmen of *Samaria*, were very much incensed against *Pilate*: and accused him, to *Vitellius*, the præident of *Syria*, desiring that he might be removed from the government. And *the jews* either joined with them herein; or, however, soon after, brought accusations against him. And (notwithstanding all his former base compliances) they, also, petitioned that he might be deposed. *Vitellius* commanded *Pilate* to go to *Rome*, to answer to the emperor, [*Tiberius*,] for those

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those

^r Ibid. c. 2. § 1, 2.

^f Vid. Philo. de legatione ad Caium, p. 1034.

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those things, of which he was accused, by *the samaritanes* and *jews*. Upon which, *Pilate* (who had been *procurator*, there, for ten years) hastened away, from *Judæa*, in order to go to *Rome*. For he dared not to refuse obedience to the command of *Vitellius*.^t This must have been a grievous mortification to him, who had scrupled no methods to establish himself in the government. A few years after this, (as *Eusebius* hath informed us, from the *greek historians*) *Pilate* made away with himself; because of his haveing fallen under so many, and such great, calamities.^u And the place, where he made so miserable an end, is commonly reckoned to have been at *Vienna* in *Gaul*. — Thus ended the life of that infamous and unjust judge, who gave sentence against OUR BLESSED LORD; contrary to the dictates of his own conscience, and to gratifie *the jews*; who, notwithstanding, brought the accusation against him, which he hoped, by such unworthy methods, to have prevented.

I was willing to finish the history of *Pilate* all together. But, from *the samaritanes* readinesse to follow that *impostor*; and from *Josephus* his intimateing, “that he contrived all that he said, so as might best please the people;” it may be farther observed, that *the samaritanes* plainly appear to have been in expectation of some extraordinary events happening about this time. And particularly, that GOD would make some discoveries and regulations concerning matters of *religion*. For, certainly, if they found those sacred vessels, they supposed they should have some instructions what to do with them. Nor could they think him an *ordinary prophet*, who should be honored with such a commission. In our present copies of *Josephus*, *Moses* is said to have hid those sacred vessels.^x In an antient *samaritane chronicle*, which *Reland* had in manuscript, the hiding those vessels is ascribed to *Ozes*, or *Ozi*; by whom was, perhaps, meant the high-priest *Uzzi*.^y It is ascribed to *Jeremiah*; [2 Maccab. ii. 4, — 8.] and he is said to have hid them in *mount Nebo*. But it seemeth to have been the same story, originally: though the names now differ so much, in the places here mentioned. What I would infer, from all this, is, that, according to the *traditions*, which they then had among them, the finding of those sacred vessels was to be immediately followed, by very glorious times, and new discoveries of the divine will: — Such glorious times,

^t Joseph. Antiq. l. 18. c. 4. § 1, 2. edit. Havercamp.

^u Chron. p. 78.

& Hist. Eccles. l. 2. c. 7. Oros. 7, 5.

^x See Dr. Lardner's Credibility, &c.

part I. p. 174, &c. 2d. edit. p. 294, &c. 3d. edit. and bishop Chandler's defence of christianity, p. 57. Hudson. not. in Joseph. Antiq. l. 18. c. 4. § 1. edit. Havercamp.

^y 1 Chron. vi. 5, 6.

times, and such signal discoveries, as *the jews* then expected would happen, in the days of *the messiah*; and as *the jews*, to this day, expect, at his coming.^a Which confirmeth the account given, *John* iv. 25; 29. namely, that *the samaritanes* looked for the coming of *the messiah*, as well as *the jews*.

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It doeth not appear that *the jews* had any *procurator*, residing among them; or any person, who had the power of life and death, from the removeal of *Pilate*, to the accession of *Herod Agrippa*; whom *Claudius Cæsar* constituted king of *the jews*. For *Vitellius*, having commanded *Pilate* to go to *Rome*, sent his friend, *Marcellus*, to administer the affairs of *Judæa*.^a As, therefore, he was sent thither, onely by *Vitellius*, he could not have the power of life and death. For *Ulpian* saith, that no officer, under the *emperor*, could convey this power to another. When *Caius Caligula*, the emperor, did afterwards send *Marullus*, from *Rome*, it was onely as *master*, or *præfect*, of the horse;^b which was an office of considerable power, under *Vitellius*, and tended to keep things in tolerable order. But *Vitellius* himself, who seldom resided in *Judæa*, had the superior causes in his hands; and, particularly, the power of life and death. As had also *Petronius*, who was præfident of *Syria* after him. *The jews*, therefore, who were commonly a riotous and seditious people, and excessively fond of power, would, during this period, (very probably,) take an unusual licence; when they had no *procurator*; nor any person, among them, with the power of life and death. And the præfident of *Syria* (who was invested with that power) did chiefly reside at so great a distance as *Antioch*. The behavior of *Ananus*, and his council, in the interval, between the death of *Porcius Festus*, and the arrival of his successor, *Albinus*, is a proof how ready the *jews* were to lay hold of such opportunities.^c And none were so likely to feel the weight of their power, as the disciples and followers of *JESUS*. Nay; farther; such was the temper of *Vitellius*, that we may very reasonably suppose the *jews* enjoyed some peculiar indulgences, under his administration. For he was excessively complaisant, and obsequious.^d

To confirm the above-mentioned observations, we find that all the grand affairs of *Judæa* were managed, during this interval, by the

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^a See bishop *Chandler's* defence, &c. chap. i. § 3. throughout. ^a Joseph. Antiq. l. 18. c. 4. § 2. edit. Havercamp.

^b Dr. *Lardner's* Credibility. &c. part i. p. 108. 2d edit. p. 151; 180, &c. 3d edit. *Ulpian*. l. 6. pr. ff. de officio proconsul. & legati. Joseph. Antiq. Jud. l. 18. c. 6. § 10. edit. Havercamp.

^c Jos. Antiq. l. 20. c. 9. § 1. Dr. *Lardner*, ubi supra; p. 163, &c. 3d. edit.

^d Sueton. in Vitell. c. 2. Tacit. Annal. l. 6. c. 32. Dion. l. 59. p. 661. B, C, D. alias 659.

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Acts ix.
22.

praesident of Syria. For, the next passover after *Pilate* was deposed, *Vitellius* went from Syria to Jerusalem. And, the jews receiveing him, there, with great magnificence, he abolished intirely the tax upon vendible fruits; and, by his interest with the emperor *Tiberius*, procured, for the priests, the right of keeping, in the temple, the vestment of the high-priest, and all it's ornaments.^c *Herod the great*, to over-awe the jews, had taken that vestment into his custody, and kept it in the tower of *Antonia*; delivering it out, onely at the three great festivals. And so *Archelaus* had done; and the roman governors after him. But now, *Vitellius*, in return for the honorable reception, which he met with at Jerusalem, delivered to the jews the custody of that vestment; which they looked upon as no small favor. Haveing done these things, to gratifie the nation; he deposed the high-priest *Joseph*, called *Caiaphas*; and made *Jonathan*, his brother-in-law, the son of *Ananus* (or *Annas*) high-priest, in his stead. And then he returned to *Antioch* in Syria. Thus *Caiaphas* also, who, by his diligence and implacable malice, had procured the death of *JESUS*, and had since persecuted his APOSTLES and disciples, was degraded, as well as *Pilate*. And that very power and dignity taken from him, which he was so much afraid would have been undermined by *JESUS*, and his followers. But nothing undermineth authority and true honor, so much, as cruelty and a persecuteing spirit, fraud and violence.

About this time, died *Philip*, the *tetrarch*, brother of *Herod Antipas*. He had been, for above thirty years, governor of *Trachonitis*, *Gaulonitis*, and *Batanæa*. His life had been sober and peaceable; and he had the character of a good governor, and just judge. He died in the city *Bethsaida*, or *Julias*; and was there buried, with great pomp and solemnity. As he left no issue behind him, *Tiberius* added his *tetrarchy* to Syria: but the tribute of it was reserved within itself.^f

There had been a rebellion against the romans, and great commotions, in *Parthia*. And, after various attempts to settle them, *Tiberius* ordered *Vitellius* to go and make a league with *Artabanus*, king of the *Parthians*. They met, each of them attended with a guard; upon a bridge, made for that purpose, over the *Euphrates*; where they concluded upon articles of agreement. And there, *Herod, the tetrarch*, entertained them both, in a rich pavilion, curiously placed in the middle of the stream. After which, *Vitellius* returned to *Antioch*,

^c Jos. Antiq. l. 18. c. 4. § 2, 3.

^f Jos. Antiq. l. 18. c. 4. § ult.

tiobh, and *Artabanus* to *Babylon*.^s *Herod* dispatched the most early, and particular, account of all these transactions, to the emperor, *Tiberius*. So that, when *Vitellius* his intelligence came, the emperor sent back word, that he had told him nothing, but what *Herod* had already acquainted him with. This incensed *Vitellius* against *Herod*; though he smothered his resentment 'till he had a fair opportunity for revenge. This *Herod* (whom *Josephus* hath also called *Antipas*^h) had married the daughter of *Aretas*, king of *Arabia petræa*; with whom he had lived for some considerable time. But, as he went to *Rome*, he happened to take his brother *Philip's*ⁱ house in the way; and there fell passionately in love with *Herodias*, his brother's wife: to whom he proposed marriage, and she consented. She it was, who occasioned the beheading of *John the Baptist*. For he freely and justly reprov'd them, for that incestuous marriage. And she took that revenge, instead of reforming upon his admonition. And it was this *Herod*, to whom OUR SAVIOR was sent, by *Pilate*, when he was accused before him. [Luke xxiii. 6, 7.] The daughter of *Herodias* (who danced before *Herod*, when he made that rash promise, to give her what she should desire, even to the half of his kingdom) was, very probably, *Salome*, whom she had by her first husband, *Philip*.^k In order to that incestuous

An. Christi
35.
Tiber. 22.
Book I.
Ch. VIII.
Acts ix.

^s Ibid. c. 4. § 4, 5. Tacit. Annal. l. 6. c. 37, ad fin. ^h De Bell. Jud. l. 2. c. 6. § 3. collat. cum c. 9. § 1. Ἡρώδης ὁ καλεθεὶς Ἀντίπας.
ⁱ *Josephus* hath called this *Philip*, by the name of *Herod*. [Antiq. Jud. l. 18. c. 5. § 1.] For the descendents of *Herod the great* had, many of them, that name. But, that this was a distinct person from *Philip the tetrarch*; and, most probably, a private person, who lived at *Jerusalem*, and was called *Philip Herod*; see Dr. *Lardner's Credibility*, &c, part i. book. i. chap. 1. p. 22. book ii. chap. 5. p. 884, &c. 3d edition.
^k *Joseph. Antiq. l. 18. c. 5. § 4. Dr. Lardner's Credibility*, &c. part i. p. 23. "Of *Salome*, the daughter of *Herodias*, it is related, that she, going over the ice, in the winter, the ice broke; and she slipt in, up to the head; which at last was severed from her body, by the sharpness of the ice: *Idque non sine dei numine*. God requireing her head, for that of the baptist's, which she desired. Which, if true, was a wonderful providence." [See Dr. *Whitby on Matt. xiv. 11.*] "Dr. *Whitby* did well to say, [if true.] For the story hath the air of a legend; was unknown to the antients; is not adopted even by *Tillemont*, h. e. i. 101. and can boast no better vouchers, than *Nicephorus*, and *Symeon Metaphrastes*; such fabulous writers, as can deserve no regard, more especially the latter of them.
"Of all the actors in this tragedy, *Salome* seems to have been the least guilty; as she was a girl of onely 14 years of age; and acted under the command of her profligate mother. [See Mr. *Jortin's remarks on ecclesiastical history*, vol. 3. p. 249.]
I the rather mention this, to deter the friends of christianity from makeing use of any history, that is not well attested, or any observations that are groundlesse. For these things disserve christianity, in the end; and cause men to suspect the true testimonies, and just observations, of the authors that make use of them.

An. Christi
 35.
 Tiber. 22.
 Book I.
 Ch. VIII.
 Acts ix.
 22.

tuous marriage, it was agreed, between *Herod* and *Herodias*, that he should put away his former wife, the daughter of *Aretas*; who, having private and early intelligence of the affair, fled to her father. This treatment of his daughter greatly incensed *Aretas*. And, some time after that, there happened a dispute between them, about their boundaries, in *Gamala*. These things occasioned a battle, and ended in the defeat of *Herod*; whose army was utterly routed, and overthrown, by the treachery of some fugitives out of his brother *Philip's* tetrarchy, who had taken up arms, under a pretence of fighting for *Herod*. Upon being defeated by *Aretas*, *Herod* had wrote to *Tiberius*, for help and redresse. And the emperor (either envying *Aretas* his victory; or being affronted at his audaciousness, in that he, who was but a tributary prince, had dared to fight within the *roman empire*) sent orders immediately to *Vitellius*, to go and make war with *Aretas*; and either bring him alive in chains, or send his head to *Rome*.¹ *Vitellius*, having got all things ready for the war, hastened away for *Arabia petraea*; taking along with him two legions, and as many other light-armed soldiers and horse-men, as the allies brought him. And he came as far as *Ptolemais*. But, as he was about to march his army, through *Judaea*, the chief men of the *jewish* nation met him; and begged that the army might march another way, because of the images in their banners, which were offensive to the *jews*. *Vitellius* complied with their earnest request; and, having ordered his army to take their rout through the great plane; he himself, and *Herod the tetrarch*, with their friends, went up to *Jerusalem*, to offer sacrifices, and worship GOD; a feast of the *jews* (most probably, the *passover*,) being then just at hand. *Vitellius* was, now again, received, with great respect, by the *jews*. And, after he had been there three days, he took away the high-priest-hood from *Jonathan* (upon whom he had conferred it, the year before) and gave it to his brother, *Theophilus*. But, upon the fourth day after his arriveal at *Jerusalem*, he received letters, which brought him an account of the death of *Tiberius*; who died this year, *March* 16. Upon which, he took an oath of the people to *Caius Caligula*, the succedeing emperor.^m *Tiberius* was the emperor, under whom OUR LORD was crucified: a man of such a brutish, cruel, and jealous temper, that it was necessary for OUR SAVIOR, if he would not die, as a criminal, and a traitor, to take heed to his words and actions; lest he should do, or say, any thing, which might be offensive, or give the least umbrage to the *roman government*.

¹ Id. ibid. § 1.

^m Joseph. Antiq. l. 18. c. 5. § 3.

ment. He therefore did, very justly, keep himself upon the reserve ; especially as to owning himself *the king of the jews* ; even though his kingdom was not of this world. Notwithstanding his innocence, as he had something extraordinary in him, it was necessary to be very wary, under that jealous and cruel prince ; who encouraged informations, and filled his reign with executions for treason. For, words spoken innocently, or in jest, if they could be mis-construed, were, by him, made *treason* ; and prosecuted with such rigor, as made it always the same thing to be accused, and condemned.ⁿ And, therefore, when the *jews* told *Pilate*, [John xix. 12.] “ If thou lettest “ this man [*JESUS*] go, thou art not *Cæsar*’s friend. For whosoever “ maketh himself a king, is a rebel to *Cæsar*.” He asketh them no more, “ Whether they would have *Barabbas* released, or *JESUS* ? ” but, even against his conscience, gave *JESUS* up to death, to secure his own head. After all his other infamous conduct, *Tiberius* chose *Caius Caligula* to succede him in the empire : — a person of so exceeding brutish, and cruel a disposition, that it hath been suspected *Tiberius* chose him, in particular, for his successor ; as foreseeing that *Caius* would out-do him, in what was vile and abominable.^o At least, his excessive wickedness, and intolerable shocking behavior, tended greatly to obliterate the horror and infamy of *Tiberius* his name and memory.^p Upon the death of *Tiberius*, *Vitellius* recalled the army, which was marching against *Aretas* ; and ordered them into their winter-quarters.^q For he had not forgot the affront, which he had lately received from *Herod*. And, therefore, no wonder he was backward to ingage in his quarrel. Besides ; he knew not whether *Caligula* would approve of the orders, which he had received from *Tiberius*. *Aretas*, therefore, still continued undisturbed, in the effects and acquisitions of his victory over *Herod*. Though, as he had such powerful enemies as the *romans*, to join with *Herod*, we may reasonably suppose he would be upon his guard.

And, finally ; while *Saul* was preaching the gospel in *Arabia*, *Flavius Josephus*, the famous *jewish historian*, was borne. He was, by his father, of the race of the *priests* ; and of the first of the twenty-four courses. And, by his mother, was descended from the *Asmonæan family* ;

ⁿ See Mr. *Locke’s Reasonableness of the christian religion*, p. 507. vol 2. of his works, in folio, 3d edit. 1727. p. 546. 4th edit. 1740. Joseph. Antiq. l. 18. c. 6. § 5, 6, 10. Dion. l. 57, 58. & Sueton. in Tiber. c. 49, &c.

^o Dion. Cass. l. 58. p. 634. alias, p. 632, 633.

^p Eutrop. brev. hist. rom. l. 7. § 12. Sueton. in Calig. c. 11. Joseph. Antiq. l. 18. c. 6. § 9. l. 19. c. 1. § 1

^q Id. ibid. l. 18. c. 5. § 3.

An. Christi
35.
Tiber. 22.
Book I.
Ch. VIII.
Acts ix.

An. Christi ^{35.} family; in which the regal power was united with that of the high-
 Tiber. 22. priesthood, for several ages. He was borne at *Jerusalem*, in the first
 Book I. year of *Caius Caligula*.^r At sixteen years of age, he began to inquire
 Ch. VIII. into the sentiments of the different *sects* among the *jews*; the *pharisees*,
 Acts ix. *sadducees*, and *essenes*. At twenty-six, he went to *Rome*, to petition
 22. the emperor *Nero*, in behalf of several *priests* of his acquaintance, whom
Felix had sent bound to *Rome*. At *Puteoli*, he got acquainted with
 one *Aliturus*, a *jew*; who had ingratiated himself with *Nero*, by be-
 ing a mimic, or *comædian*. And he introduced him to *Poppæa*, *Ne-
 ro's* wife; by whose favor he presently obtained liberty for his friends,
 and from whom he received many considerable presents himself. The
 next year, he returned into *Judæa*: where he saw all things tending
 to a revolt, under *Gessius Florus*; and found great disturbances among
 the *jews*. In the beginning of the *jewish* war, he commanded in *Gal-
 ilee*. When *Vespasian*, who was general under *Nero*, had conquered
 that country, *Josephus* was taken at *Jotapata*. He, and forty more
jews, had hid themselves in a subterraneous cavern. After thirty-nine
 of them had cast lots, and killed one another, rather than fall into
 the hands of the *romans*; he, and the other who survived, agreed not
 to lay violent hands upon themselves, nor to imbrue their hands in one
 another's blood; but rather to deliver themselves up to the *romans*.^s
 Upon which, he gave himself up to *Nicanor*, who conducted him to
Vespasian. That general, after some time, showed him great favor;
 and *Josephus* continued with him, as long as *Vespasian* stayed in those
 parts. When *Vespasian* was declared emperor, and went to *Rome*, to
 take possession of the empire, *Josephus* stayed with *Titus*, his son; was
 present at the siege of *Jerusalem*; and saw, with his own eyes, the
 amazing desolation of the city and country. He afterwards settled at
Rome; and obtained the freedom of that city from *Vespasian*. Some
 time after the destruction of *Jerusalem*, he wrote the history of the *jew-
 ish wars*, in seven books. After that, he wrote, in twenty books, the
jewish antiquities; or the history of the *jews*, from the creation of the
 world, to the twelfth year of *Nero*; when the wars broke out, which
 ended in that universal ruine. This work he finished in the 56th
 year of his age; in the 13th year of the reign of *Domitian*, An.
 Christi, 93.^t Besides this, we have his life, written by himself; and
 two books against *Appion*, an *Ægyptian* author, who had calumniated
 the

^r In vita Joseph. § 1, &c. De bell. jud. proæm.
 l. 3. c. 8. § 7.

^s Joseph. de bell. jud.
^t Joseph. Antiq. l. 20. c. 11. § 2.

the *jewish people*.^u These works, *Josephus* wrote in the *greek language*.^{An. Christi}
 They are valuable monuments of *antiquity*; especially to the *christian*^{37.}
world; and bear a more remarkable testimony to the *gospel*; as he ^{Calig. 1.}
 evidently appeareth, by his silence concerning many events, to have ^{Book I.}
 had so great an aversion to the *christians*. However; OUR SAVIOR'S ^{Chap. IX.}
prophecie, concerning the destruction of the city of *Jerusalem*, and ^{Sect. I.}
 the *temple*; and the great calamities, that were coming upon that na- ^{Acts ix.}
 tion; plainly appear (according to the account, which *Josephus* hath ^{23.}
 given us, from what he himself knew and saw) to have been the
 most punctually accomplished. And the writings of an inveterate
 enemy to *christianity*, bear the most ample testimony of it's truth and
 divinity. To his excellent *writings* are we, also, much indebted, for
 many other things, which give light to the *sacred scriptures*: such as
 the *jewish antiquities*, and the *customs*, which then prevailed; and the
history of the *jews* and *romans*, about that time; with which he was
 so well acquainted.

C H A P. IX.

The history of SAUL continued.

S E C T. I.

SAUL *planteth christianity among the jews, in Arabia Deserta: re-*
turneth to Damascus; preacheth christianity, in the synagogues,
there: exasperateth the jews; so that he narrowly escapes with
his life. Acts ix. 23, 24, 25. 2 Cor. xi. 32, 33. Galat. i.
 17, 18, 19.

THOUGH St. LUKE hath not given us a particular ac-
 count of this part of *Saul's* travels; yet, from *ver. 23.* he
 appears not to have been ignorant of it. For he saith, that it was
 not 'till after many days were fulfilled, or 'till some considerable time
 after *Saul's* conversion, that the *jews* at *Damascus* plotted his death.
 And *Saul* himself hath led us to conclude, that it was not 'till after
 he returned from *Arabia*, to *Damascus*, just before he went up to *Je-*
 VOL. I. D d *rusalem.*

^u Dr. Lardner's Credibility, &c. part i. p. ix, x. 2d edit. p. xiii. 3d edit.

An. Christi ^{37.} *rusalem.* Possibly, the reason why St. LUKE so transiently passed over this *prophetic journey* of *Saul*, was, because it was the most private and inconsiderable. Or, rather, because he thought he had other instances enow, to lay before his reader, of *Saul's* promoting christianity, as a *superior prophet*. Besides; it is evident, that he hastened to the *history* of *Saul's apostleship*; which was much more material; and about which, he designed to treat more largely. However; as I am desirous to bring together every thing, which can give light to the *christian history*, within this period, I will not omit to take notice of the broken and imperfect hints, which are dispersed, in his *epistles*, concerning this his journey into *Arabia*; as well as what treatment he met with, when he returned, and preached the *gospel*, in the synagogues, at *Damascus*.

Calig. 1.
Book I.
Chap. IX.
Sect. I.
Acts ix.
23.

As *Saul's* abode at *Damascus*, both upon his conversion, and at his returning from *Arabia*, appear to have been very short; he must (according to his own account) have spent almost three years in *Arabia*. His going so soon from *Damascus*, and preaching the *gospel* so long in a remote country, where there were no *christians*, before his coming, is, what he himself very justly allegeth, as a proof, that "he received not the knowledge of the *gospel-doctrine* from any other of the APOSTLES, or *christians*; but immediately from OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, or by the illumination of the *spirit*." ^a And, as none but *jews* had hitherto been accepted into the *christian church*; it is reasonable to suppose, that *Saul* preached, in *Arabia*, to none but to *jews* onely.

Returning from *Arabia*, he came again to *Damascus*. And, going into one of the synagogues there, he preached the *christian doctrine* to the *jews*, as he had done before. But they, not being content with barely rejecting his *doctrine*, consulted how they might take away his life. For they looked upon him, as a *grand apostate*; whose conversion greatly strengthened the interest of *christianity*.

Damascus did now belong to *Aretas*, king of *Arabia*; ^b who governed it, by an *ethnarch*, or deputy-governor. It has been observed, that

Ver. 23. ^a Gal. i. 11, — 19.

^b I should have thought this to have been sufficiently confirmed by *Pocock's Observations* on the *Arabian history*; if the account, given by *Josephus*, and others, had not differed from it. For *Pocock* represents the *Arabians*, as having an uninterrupted possession of *Syria Damascena*, for six hundred and sixteen years; and that this *Aretas* was one of the kings in that succession. Whereas; both *Josephus*, and other authors, say, that the *romans* conquered *Damascus*, under *Pompey*; and yet they intimate

that *Herod's* army was routed by *Aretas*. And, after *Aretas* had broken with his son-in-law, and got such a signal victory over him, who was a *jew*, and son to *Herod the great*, the late king of the *jews*; very probably, the *jews*, in general, would have less interest in the king of *Arabia's* dominions, and rather be watched and suspected by him. This might be the reason, perhaps, why they could not apprehend *Saul*, in the synagogue; as he himself thought formerly to have apprehended the *christians*. However; though the *jews* could not, by their own power, compass their design; nor would *Aretas* himself, perhaps, have granted them such a favor; yet they made interest with his *ethnarch*, that the garrison might have orders to apprehend *Saul*, and deliver him into their hands. After such a battle, it was necessary for *Aretas* more strongly to garrison all his cities. For he knew that the *romans* claimed it, as their right, to decide the affairs of *princes*; and looked upon it as an indignity, for any to fight, within the borders of the *empire*, without leave first obtained of them. He knew, also, that he had fought without their permission; and he could not long be without intelligence of their design to assist *Herod*. The garrison, which he had set to guard, and defend *Damascus*, upon that occasion, was (I suppose) the very garrison, to whom the *ethnarch* gave that additional order, to apprehend *Saul*, and deliver him up to the *jews*. Possibly, the *jews* might incense the *ethnarch* against him, by pretending that (though they were loyal subjects) *Saul* was a spy for *Herod*, or for the *romans*, and an enemy to the *Arabians*; and so draw him into their quarrel. For, what will not persecuting and malicious men say, or do, in the current of their blind zeal; and when hotly engaged to oppose truth and goodness? But, whatever their pretence was, they prevailed with him to give such orders to the garrison; who, according to their request, watched the gates of the

D d 2

city,

mate nothing of it's being restored to the *Arabians*. [Vid. *Pocock*, Not. in *Abul-far*. p. 77, 78. & *Spec.* p. 57, &c. and Mr. *Sale's* preliminary discourse to the *Koran*, p. 10, 11. With which compare *Joseph. Antiq. Jud.* l. 13. c. 15. § 2. & *de Bell. Jud.* l. 1. c. 4. § ult. & *Antiq. Jud.* l. 14. c. 2. § ult. *Hieron.* in *Isa.* xvii. 1. *Dion. Cass.* l. 36. p. 36. [alias, 37.] B. & *Joseph. Antiq. Jud.* l. 14. c. 4. § ult. & c. 9. § 5. & c. 11. § 4. & ult. & l. 15. c. 3. § penult. & c. 10. § 1.] However; *Damascus* belonged to *Arabia*, in the second century, as *Justin Martyr* expressly affirms. [*Dial. cum Trypho.* *Parisi. edit.* 1636. p. 305. A.] And, as he was borne in *Palæstine*, he must have known the fact. But how, or when, the *Arabians* recovered it; or had it restored to them, by the *romans*; I have not been able to find.

Upon farther considering this matter, I apprehend that the *romans* never took away *Damascus* from the *Arabians*; but that *Aretas* his kingdom was tributary to the *romans*; and that he held his dominion, under them, as a dependent and tributary prince.

An. Christi
38.
Calig. 2.
Book 1.
Ch. IX.
Sect. I.
Acts ix.
24, 25.

An. Christi 38.
Calig. 2.
Book I.
Ch. IX.
Sect. II.
Acts ix.
25.

city, day and night, that *Saul* might not escape. But he, haveing intimations of the steps which they were takeing, kept himself concealed, for some days; and no more appeared, in any of their *synagogues*, or in any public place. And, as soon as they could do it with safety, the *christians* took him, and let him down, by night, in a large basket, through the window of a house, which joined to the walls of the city; and, by that mean, the bloody-minded *jews* lost their prey.

C H A P. IX. S E C T. II.

SAUL goeth to Jerusalem; seeth PETER and JAMES. The christians were afraid of him. Barnabas introduced him among them; and satisfied them of his conversion. The christians are convinced, and admit him to their confidence and familiarity. He disputed with some of the hellenistic jews, who sought his life. Upon which, the christians conveyed him away to his native country. Acts ix. 26, — 30.

U P O N his escapeing from *Damascus*, Saul went up to *Jerusalem*; where he had never been, since his conversion to *christianity*. And thither he went, chiefly to visit the great APOSTLE of the *circumcision*; [Gal i. 18.] who, as some of the *christians* had informed him, did then reside at that city. He had, very probably, heard much talk of St. PETER; which made him long for the sight and acquaintance of one so eminent in the *christian church*.

*Great souls, by instinct, to each other turn;
Demand alliance, and in friendship burn.*

And, indeed, there was something alike in their case. For the one had been recovered to the dignity of one of the prime ministers of the *circumcision*, after a three-fold denial of his LORD and master. The other, from a persecutor of the *christians*, was already converted,

ed, and made an eminent *prophet*; and was farther designed for the great *apostolate* of the *gentile world*. But, though *Saul* went as a friend, to visit St. PETER, and the *christian church*; yet, as he had been so zealous and distinguished a *persecutor*; and had, since his conversion, been mostly in *Arabia deserta*; a country, with which *Jerusalem* had but little correspondence; the *christians* were still afraid of him. They knew how he had persecuted their brethren in *Jerusalem*, formerly; and gone, to *Damascus*, in pursuit of them: but they, very probably, had had little, or no, account of his conversion. Though it seemeth strange, that so remarkable an event should have been so long hid from them! However: some very probable reasons have been alleged; why they had not had a full and satisfactorie account of this affair; such as, (1.) The war between *Herod* and *Aretas*, might greatly interrupt the correspondence between *Jerusalem* and *Damascus*. (2.) As the *christians* in *Judæa* were under a violent persecution, those of *Damascus* might be afraid of going to *Jerusalem*; and the *christians* of *Jerusalem* might not be able to carry on their correspondence, so regularly, with the *christians* at a distance. (3.) Perhaps the persecuting *jews* might raise jealousies; and pretend that *Saul* acted that part, as their spy; when they had really lost him as their fellow-persecutor. But, whatever was the cause, the *christians* at *Jerusalem* still doubted his integrity; and could hardly believe, that so great an enemy, as he had been, could be any other than a feigned convert; who thrust himself in, among them, as a spy, in order to molest and persecute them more effectually. Some affirm that *Barnabas* had been his old acquaintance; and had sat, with him, at the feet of *Gamaliel*; and therefore he might know him to be a man of too much veracity, to act an insincere part. But I question whether that account can be depended upon; as it cometh so late, and is not mentioned by the *fathers*, nor by any body that I know of, 'till *Simeon Metaphrastes* affirmed it, in the tenth century. However; *Barnabas* was, some way or other, fully satisfied of the truth and reality of *Saul's* conversion. He, therefore, with great propriety, took *Saul* by the hand, and introduced him to the APOSTLES; namely, to St. PETER, who had gone with St. JOHN to *Samaria*, and who was now come back again; and to St. JAMES, the kinsman of OUR LORD. [Gal. i. 18, 19.] For these were the onely APOSTLES, whom *Saul* now saw at *Jerusalem*. The other APOSTLES had dispersed themselves to plant, or water, the *christian religion*, in different places: and, especially, to confirm and establish such converts, as the *christians* had made, in their several dispersions; by the laying on of their hands,

and

An. Christi
38.
Calig. 2.
Book I.
Ch. IX.
Sect. II.
Acts ix.
26, &c.

An. Christi 38. Calig. 2. Book I. Ch. IX. Sect. II. Acts ix. 27, &c. and imparting unto them the gift of the holy spirit. Barnabas fully convinced the church at Jerusalem, of Saul's being a sincere convert, by allegeing the manner of his conversion, together with the effects of it; namely, that he had seen the glory of the LORD, as he was upon the road to Damascus, when he was going thither to persecute the christians: that a voice came along with the glory, which reprov'd and convinced him: and that he himself had afterwards preached boldly, at Damascus, in the name of the LORD JESUS; proving him to be the promised, and long-expected, messiah.

Saul tarried onely fifteen days at Jerusalem, along with PETER and JAMES, and the christian brethren; who used him with an intire confidence, as fully satisfied of his integrity. And he preached, openly, and undauntedly, in the name of the LORD JESUS; even at Jerusalem also, where he had formerly shown himself a zealous pharisee, had assisted at the stoneing of St. Stephen, and persecuted and opposed the other christians. Particularly, he disputed with some of the hellenistic jews; that very sort of persons, with whom he had joined in stoneing the proto-martyr. Possibly, he thought he could do more good among them, than among the hebrews. For the hebrews had not onely known him to have been one of them; and consequently were more præjudiced against him, since his conversion: but (what is more) christianity had been so long preached in Jerusalem, that the harvest of the hebrew converts was gathered in; and the rest were generally hardened, almost beyond all hopes of conviction. However; Saul had no great successe among the hellenists. For, when he had quite confounded them, and put them to silence, in disputing; they took the very method, which he and his old associates had used against St. Stephen; and contrived how to put him to death. But, by the favor of a kind providence, he made his escape. For the christian brethren, haveing notice of their wicked design, took care to convey him away to Cæsarea. And, from thence, they sent him, by land,^a to Cilicia, his native province; and to Tarsus, the very city, where he was borne; that he might find protection among his old friends and relations, and perhaps plant the gospel among them. They, possibly, might not have heard of his former bigotry

Ver. 30: a " [Conduſted him to Cæsarea.] I should have concluded this had been
 " the celebrated city of that name, on the mediterranean sea, so often mentioned af-
 " terwards, and from whence he might so easily have passed by ship to Tarsus; had
 " not PAUL himself told us, he went through the regions of Syria and Cilicia. [Gal. i.
 " 21.] which

bigotry against the *christians*: Or, however; as the harvest of the *jews* at *Tarsus* was not yet gathered in, as it had been, some time ago, at *Jerusalem*; there were hopes of better treatment, and more succeſſe, there.

Saul was hitherto unknown, by face, to most of the *christian churches*, in *Judæa*. Onely they had heard of his remarkable conversion. The news of which had spread among them; especially since his last coming up to *Jerusalem*. And they understood that he, who formerly persecuted them, now preached the doctrine, which once he destroyed. And for that they gave praise and glory unto GOD.^b

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Acts ix.

C H A P. IX. S E C T. III.

The ceaseing of the persecution, together with the occasion of it. Acts ix. 31.

HEROD Agrippa major was son of *Aristobulus*, grandson of *Herod the great*, and brother of *Herodias*; who had left her first husband *Philip*, and married his brother *Herod Antipas*. This *Herod Agrippa* had been educated at *Rome*; and conversed freely in the emperor's family:^a where he became acquainted with *Drusus*, son of the emperor *Tiberius*; and was also in the good graces of *Antonia*, mother of *Germanicus* and *Claudius*, and wife of *Drusus the elder*, who was brother of *Tiberius the emperor*. The favor of *Antonia* he obtained, by means of his own mother, *Berenice*; for whom *Antonia* had a very great esteem. So grand a manner of living drove him, in the heat of his youth, into expences superior to his fortune; so that he

^a 21.] which intimates that he went by land, and makes it probable that it was *Cæsarea Philippi*, near the borders of *Syria*, which is here spoken of." [So Dr. Doddridge remarks on this place.] My principal objection, is, that the word, *Cæsarea*, alone, did not denote *Cæsarea Philippi*, but *Cæsarea Palæstinæ*, or the celebrated city of that name, on the mediterranean sea. But I acknowledge that St. PAUL's own words, [Gal. i. 21, &c.] render it probable, that he now went by land; and that in such an hurry, that he had not time to visit the *christian churches*, as he passed along, through the several towns, in *Judæa*, where there were any *christian churches*.

^b Gal. i. 22, 23, 24.

Jos. Antiq. l. 18. c. 6. § 1, &c.

An. Christi 38. Calig. 2. Book I. Ch. IX. Sect. III. Acts ix. 31. he could stay no longer at Rome. And the young *Drusus*, the son of *Tiberius*, dying; *Tiberius* was unwilling to see any of his acquaintance; for fear of reviveing the painful memory of so great a losse. *Herod*, therefore, returned into *Judæa*; and, for a long time, lived upon the bounty and favor of his friends. And, among the rest, *Herod Antipas*, and *Herodias*, were kind to him, and supported him: though not so long, nor so generously, as they might have done. At last, being reduced to great calamities, he went back to *Italy*: where he again met with great kindnesse, from *Antonia*; partly out of respect to the memory of his mother, and partly because he had been educated with her son, *Claudius Tiberius* also, the emperor, took him into particular favor; and committed to his care the younger *Tiberius*, the son of *Drusus*, and grandson to *Tiberius the emperor*. But *Herod*, being ambitious, made his court to *Caius*; who was the son of *Germanicus*, and grandson of *Antonia*; and universally respected for his father's sake. *Caius* treated him with the greatest confidence and familiarity. And one day, as they were rideing in the chariot together, "*Herod* wished to GOD that *Tiberius* was gone, and *Caius* emperor in his stead." ^b *Eutychus*, *Herod's* freed-man, drove the chariot, and overheard the words; which he then concealed. But, being, after some time, accused, by his master, of theft, he discovered the treason to *Tiberius*; who thereupon committed *Herod* to close custody. When *Tiberius* died, *Caius* soon advanced his old friend. Sending for him, to his palace, he put a crown upon his head, and constituted him king of the *tetrarchy* of *Philip*; intending also to give him the *tetrarchy* of *Lysanias*. And he bestowed upon him a chain of gold; of the same weight with the iron one, which he had wore in his imprisonment. This chain *Agrippa* did afterwards lay up in the temple at *Jerusalem*; as "a monument that GOD can bring down those things which are great, and raise up those things which are fallen."

We must now, for a while, leave the history of *Herod Agrippa*; and mention some particulars concerning *Caius Caligula*, the roman emperor; and *Flaccus Avilius*, the præfident of *Ægypt*. The beginning of *Caius* his reign was obligeing, and popular. He did many wise and beneficent actions, and gained the love of the people. They had an affectionate remembrance of *Germanicus*, his father; and they hoped his son would tread in his steps. But it was not long before he plainly discovered his wicked disposition. One of his first vile

^b Joseph. Antiq. Jud. l. 18. c. 6. § 5. &c. & de Bell. Jud. l. 2. c. 9. § 5.

vile actions was the murder of the younger *Tiberius*; whom the *emperor Tiberius* had left his co-partner in the empire. Another was the murder of *Macro*, who had been *Tiberius* his favorite, after the death of *Sejanus*; and one, to whom *Caius* himself had been exceedingly obliged. When *Caius* acted any thing unbecoming his dignity, (as, indeed, he was very apt to do) *Macro* would freely admonish him of it; 'till at last he could bear it no longer: and, therefore, ordered *Macro* to be put to death.^c By degrees, he proceeded to such extravagance, that he would needs set himself up for a *god*, and be worshiped as such: — A thing, to which the *jews*, of all nations, would never consent! And, therefore, they fell under his resentment.^d

About this time, *Flaccus Avilius*, the *præfident* of Ægypt, who had been a most excellent governor for the last five years of *Tiberius* his reign, became quite another man. While *Tiberius* was emperor, *Flaccus* had been no friend to *Caligula*.^e When, therefore, *Caligula* came to be emperor, and had put to death the younger *Tiberius* and *Macro*, in whom *Flaccus* had some interest; he was thrown into a terrible fright. His concern was visible; and all the Ægyptians knew very well the cause of it. Hereupon they got him intirely into their own hands. And, of a governor, *Flaccus* became a subject; and they of subjects became *præfidents*; inventors of uselesse decrees, directors of all affairs; takeing him in as a mere mute image in a play; for no other reason, but because he had the name of governor. The leading men among them, therefore,^f conspired together to form a most wicked design against the *jews*; and, coming to *Flaccus*, they tell him: “Sir, you have lost the young *Tiberius*; and, your next hope after him, your friend *Macro*. You have no expectation of favor from the emperor; but rather otherwise. We must necessarily contrive, for you, some powerful advocate with *Caius*. This advocate, Sir, is the city of *Alexandria*; which hath ever been honored by the imperial family, and especially by our present sovereign. If she may but obtain some favor of you, she will undertake your cause. You can oblige her, by nothing, so much, as by delivering up the *jews* into her hands.” Then he, who ought to have been provoked at so impudent a proposel, and to have reprimanded the authors of it, as incendiaries and disturbers of the public peace, tamely complied with

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what

^c Philo de Legat. ad Caium, p. 998. ^d Id. ibid. p. 1008. C, D, E. & 1020. D, E. ^e Philo in Flac. p. 965, &c. operum. Francofurti, 1691. ^f Philo. in Flac. p. 968.

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what they desired. From that time, *Flaccus* first carried it coldly to the *jews*; and, afterwards, became their open enemy. ^e The *Alexandrian jews*, when they heard of *Caligula's* succeding *Tiberius*, decreed him all the honors, which the *law of Moses* would permit them to pay him. And, as they were not allowed to send an embassy, they desired *Flaccus* to send the decree to *Rome*. He promised them he would do so, but never sent it; that he might render the *jews* odious, as the only persons who despised the new emperor. And hence *Caius* his displeasure with the *jews* seemeth to have taken it's first rise. But, before the emperor showed his dislike of them, things went very much against them at *Alexandria*. They were not only cast in all causes; but the *Ægyptians*, taking encouragement from this behavior of the governor, came by degrees to ^h rifle the houses of the *jews*, and to murder great numbers of them.

The præfident, if he had pleased, could in one hour have quieted that mad multitude. But he was under such influence, that he pretended not to hear, or see, any thing of the matter. ⁱ In this interim, *Herod Agrippa* came to *Alexandria*, in his way to *Judæa*, by the advice of *Cæsar*; who thought it the safest, and best way. ^k And, though he designed to have kept himself private, the *Alexandrians* soon got notice of his arrival, and of the design of his journey; which was to take possession of his kingdom. They were filled with envy, at the thoughts of a *jew's* having the title of *king*: and many ways they showed their indignation. One was this. There was one *Carabas*, a sort of a distracted fellow, who, in all seasons of the year, went naked about the streets. He was somewhat between a madman and a fool; the common jest of boys, and other idle people. This wretch they brought into the theatre; and placed him on a lofty seat, that he might be conspicuous to all. Then they put a paper diadem on his head, for a crown. The rest of his body they covered with a mat, instead of a robe; and, for a scepter, one put into his hand a little piece of reed, which he had just taken up from the ground. Having thus given him a mimic, royal dresse; several young fellows, with poles on their shoulders, came and stood on each side of him, as his guards. Then there came people towards him; some to pay their homage to him, others to ask justice of him, and some to know his will and pleasure concerning affairs of state. And, in the crowd, were

^e Id. *ibid.* p. 979.
legat. &c. p. 1010, 1011.

^h Philo de legat. ad Caium, p. 1009.
^k Philo in Flac. p. 968, 969.

ⁱ Philo de

were loud and confused acclamations, of *Maris, Maris*; that being (as they said) the *syriac* word for *lord*; thereby intimateing whom they intended to ridicule, by all this mock-show: *Agrippa* being a *Syrian*, and king of *Judæa*; a large country in *Syria*.¹ Other indignities, also, he suffered from the people; very probably by *Flaccus* his order, or connivance. Though he dared not publicly to affront one so much in the emperor's favor. The *Alexandrian jews* acquainted *Herod Agrippa* with the design of the *Ægyptians*, and of *Flaccus*, against them. Upon which, he took the decree, that they had made, in the beginning of *Caius* his reign; and promised them that he would send it to *Rome*, together with the reason of it's coming so late. And, accordingly, he did send it; and a proper apology along with it.^m In the mean time, the *Alexandrians* still proceeded to greater outrages against the *jews*; setting up *Caius* his image in their *proseuchaes*, or *oratories*; and afterwards demolishing their synagogues, or *oratories*.ⁿ Nay; the governor declared himself publicly their enemy. Upon which, the people spared neither age, nor sex. Even the leading men among the *jews* were, by the *præfident's* order, used with the greatest indignity; and some of them put to cruel deaths. For he hoped to ingratiate himself with *Caius*, by destroying those, who refused to acknowledge *his deity*, and to pay him *divine worship*. *Flaccus*, in the event, did himself no real service, by all these base compliances; but was treated much as *Pontius Pilate* was treated by the *jews*; being accused by those very *Ægyptians*, whose tool he had been; and whose favor he had sought, by such violent and indirect methods.

Upon the above-mentioned quarrel, between the *jews* and *greeks*, who dwelt at *Alexandria*, there were ambassadors sent to *Caius*, at *Rome*; five on each side.^o Of whom, *Appion* was the chief among the *greeks*; and *Philo* was the oldest, and most experienced, person, among the *jews*.^p *Appion*, besides many other malicious and bitter reproaches

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against

¹ Ibid. p. 970. Compare, with this, the treatment, which OUR BLESSED LORD had met with, not many years before. *Matt. xxviii. 27, — 31. Mark xv. 16, — 20.*

^m Philo in Flac. p. 980.

ⁿ Philo de legat. ad Caium, p. 1011. C, D.

^o Id. ibid. p. 1043. Joseph. antiq. l. 18. c. 8. § 1, &c.

^p *Appion* was the person, against whom *Josephus* wrote his two books, in vindication of the *jews*. And *Philo*, who is often called *Philo-Judæus*, was a *jew* of *Alexandria*; brother to *Alexander* the *alabarch*, or chief magistrate of the *jews* in that country. He was eminent for his wit and learning, as well as family. [*Joseph. Antiq. l. 18. c. 8. §. 1. edit. Havercamp. Philo de legat. 1018; 1043.*] Many of his write-

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An. Christi 39. Calig. 3. Book I. Ch. IX. Sect. III. Acts ix. 31. against the jews, alleged that they neglected the worship of *Cæsar*: “For, (saith he) when all other nations, who are subject to the *roman empire*, have erected altars and temples to *Caius*; and, in every respect, honor him as they do the *gods*; these jews alone think it an indignity to honor him with statues, or to swear by his name.” By these, and like invectives, *Caius* was so enraged, that, when *Philo* was going to reply, he would not hear him; but commanded him to depart out of his presence, in such an angry tone, that it was generally believed the jews would fall under the weight of his vengeance. And it was not long, before he discovered his resentment. About the same time, another thing happened, which farther exasperated that wicked emperor. Several of the *heathens*, who lived at *Jamnia*, a city of *Judæa*, and who had an utter aversion to the *jewish laws*; when they understood *Caius* his inclination to be worshiped as a god, and his resentment against the jews, for refuseing to join in that worship; they, on a sudden, erected an altar of brick; both to curry favor with *Cæsar*, and to molest and vex the jews. The project succeeded to their wish. For the jews quickly demolished the altar. And the *heathens* went and complained to *Capito*, the *quæstor*, or collector of the *roman* tribute in *Judæa*; who sent an account of the affair to *Caius*, with all imaginable aggravations.^a And he himself, indeed, was thought to be the secret author and contriver of the plot, in order to insnare and destroy the jews. For as he came poor into that province, and had since enriched himself by fraudulent and oppressive methods, he was afraid of the people’s accuseing him. And, therefore, by way of prevention, he first calumniated and accused them. *Caius*, looking upon these as repeted affronts, recalled *Vitellius*; who was remarkable for his excessive complaisance, and who had gratified the jews to the uttermost of his power. And he sent *Petronius* to succede him; giveing him orders to go to *Jerusalem*, with an army,^r and to set up his statue, with the name of *Jupiter* inscribed upon it, in the most

writings are still remaining; though some have been lost. I have had frequent occasion to quote his discourse against *Flaccus*, the *præsident* of *Ægypt*; and his account of this *ambassy* to *Caligula*. [See Dr. Lardner’s account of *Philo*, in his *Credibility of the gospel history*, part i. p. viii. of the 2d edition, p. xii. of the 3d edition; — in the introduction.]

^a *Philo de legat. &c.* p. 1020, 1021. ^r *Joseph. de Bell. Jud.* l. 2. c. 10. § 1, &c. collat. cum *Philon. de legat. ad Caium*, p. 1021, C. 1022. A, B. But I prefer *Philo*’s account; because he went to *Rome*, in behalf of the jews, in this dreadful time. And *Josephus* was then but an infant. *Philo, ubi supra*, p. 1019, & 1034. E.

most holy place of the temple there; injoining him, if the *jews* opposed it, to put to death all, who made any resistance, and to make the rest of the nation slaves. Very probably, the *jews* of *Judæa* were very much affected with the condition of their countrymen at *Alexandria*; where, by this time, they were almost ruined. But this order from *Caligula* was a thunder-stroke. *Petronius* marched from *Antioch* into *Judæa*, and a large body of auxiliaries raised in *Syria*. The *jews* could hardly believe the first report of so execrable a design. But it was not long, before all were convinced. And it threw them into the utmost consternation; the army being come as far as *Ptolemais*. They, therefore, gathering together, went with their wives and children into the plane, near *Ptolemais*: and intreated *Petronius*, in the first place, for their laws; and, in the next place, for themselves. *Petronius*, being moved with their intreaties, left his army and the image, at *Ptolemais*; and went into *Galilee*. At *Tiberias*, he called together the chief men of the *jews*, and laid before them the power of the *romans*, the threatenings of *Cæsar*, and the folly and absurdity of their request: intimateing, that, as all other nations had received the image of *Cæsar*, among their other *gods*; the refusal of the *jews* would be looked upon, as little lesse than rebellion, and an high contempt and indignity to the *emperor*. When they, after all, utterly refused to comply, and declared themselves ready to suffer any thing for *their laws*, he asked them: "Will you then fight against *Cæsar*?" The *jews* answered him: That they offered up sacrifices, twice every "day, for *Cæsar*; and the *roman people*. But that, if he would set "up the image, he ought first to sacrifice the whole nation of the *jews*. "And, that they were ready to submit themselves, with their wives "and children, to the slaughter." *Philo* saith,^f that the tidings of this order haveing reached *Jerusalem*, the *jews* abandoning their cities, villages, and the open countrie, all went to *Petronius* in *Phœnicia*; both men and women, old and young, and middle-aged. *Petronius* his friends, at a distance, took them for a large army. But, when they came nearer, they found it was onely an unarmed, lamenting, multitude. When they came within sight of *Petronius*, who was seated upon an eminence, they threw themselves down upon the ground before him, with weeping and lamentation. And, when he ordered them to rise, they approached him, with their heads covered with dust, and their hands behind them, like men condemned to die.

And.

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^f De legat. ad Caium, p. 1024. E, &c.

An. Christi 39. Calig. 3. Book I. Ch. IX. Sect. III. Acts ix. 31. And then *the senate* addressed themselves to *Petronius*, in this manner :
 “ We come to you, Sir, as you see, unarmed. We have brought,
 “ with us, our wives, children, and relations ; and throw ourselves
 “ down, before you, as at the feet of *Caius* ; haveing left none at
 “ home, that you may save all, or destroy all,” &c. with a great
 deal more to the same purpose. In which, they repeted their love
 of *their temple*, and *their laws*, more than of their lives. — And
 all which they expressed, with tears, and all the signs of anguish and
 distresse. *Petronius*, out of compassion, defered the executeing of
 his commission. And he had a very good pretence for his delay.
 For the *jews* were in danger of neglecting the gathering in their
 harvest, and the cultivateing of their lands ;^t out of so general a con-
 cern for the violation of *their religion*. And as it was expected
 that *Caligula* would be at *Alexandria*, the next summer, he judged
 it improper to do any thing, that might hinder a sufficient plenty,
 for the company, which would follow the *emperor*, from *Italy* ; the
 concourse of the princes of *Asia*, and other great men in those
 parts. He, therefore, wrote to the *emperor* ; representing the case
 as favorably as he could : particularly, not forgetting to urge the
 necessity of defering the matter, for fear of the scarceity which might
 insue.

It is highly probable that the *persecution* of the *christians* ceased ;
 not onely at this time, but upon this occasion. For the *jews* were
 fully imployed in warding off this terrible blow from themselves ;
 and from the *temple*, which was their glory and confidence. Un-
 der so general a consternation, and in such circumstances of distresse,
 they could not have the heart, or the leisure, to look after, or per-
 secute, the *christians*. “ Suppose it should be objected, that the *chris-*
 “ *tians* would have been as far from worshiping *Caius*, as a god, as
 “ any of the *jews*. And, as they thought the *levitical law* to remain
 “ in full force and obligation ; they must have been concerned for
 “ the *temple* also ; and as unwilling as the rest of the nation to
 “ have it polluted. — And, therefore, so general a calamity must
 “ have equally affected them. So that, in such an interval, *their*
 “ *churches* could have no great rest.” I would answer ; that (very
 probably) it grieved and troubled them, as well as the other *jews*,
 to think, that the *emperor* should pollute the *temple of GOD* ; and
 (perhaps) some of them might go, and join in the petition to *Pe-*
tronus.

^t Id. ibid. p. 1028.

tronius. But, considering how *the unbelieving jews* had lately treated them; it could not be expected that they should go in a body; or, generally speaking, appear in such a petition at all. Nay, farther; the persecution of the *christians* had hitherto risen from the *jews*; and the *romans* had not molested, but rather protected, them. And, as the *romans*, both now, and for a long time after this, looked upon the *christians*, as onely a *sect* of the *jews*; and the *unbelieving jews*, their persecutors, were at present engaged in difficulties and discouragements, which so nearly affected themselves; the *christians* might enjoy full liberty to profess their own peculiar sentiments, and follow their own manner of worship. For *Caius* did not yet require the *jewish nation* directly to worship him: [Such an order, indeed, would have affected the *christians*!] Nor was the temple actually prophaned with his statue. For *Herod Agrippa* prevailed with him to delay the matter; and *Caligula* died^u, before the attempt was made; as will be related hereafter, in it's proper place.

Commentators have generally ascribed *this rest of the christian churches* to the conversion of *Saul*; who had, indeed, been a very zealous persecutor. But it hath (with great probability) been ascribed to the above-mentioned events.^x For the ascribing it to *Saul*, seemeth to do him a great deal of wrong, on the one hand; and too much honor, on the other. To ascribe to him, all the sufferings of the *christians*, which ensued upon the death of *St. Stephen*, would surely be great injustice to *Saul*: because, after his conversion, the *jews* of *Judæa*, *Damascus*, and every other place, were filled with malice and spite against *christianity*, against *Saul*, and against every one else of that way. On the other hand; it is doing him, at the same time, too much honor. *Saul* was then but a young man. And, though a forward and active instrument, yet he could be no more than an instrument, in that persecution. It cannot be supposed, that, whilst he was with the *high-priest* and *pharisees*, they were directed, and chiefly animated, by him; and that when he left them, their spirits were so sunk, that they could no longer pursue their old measures. His own dangers, at *Damascus*, and *Jerusalem*, are a clear proof of the contrary. Besides; according

^u Tacit. hist. l. 5. c. 9.

Ver. 31. ^x See Dr. Lardner, in his *Credibility of the gospel history*, part i. p. 123. &c. 2d edit. p. 207, &c. 3d edit.

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31.

ing to the series of St. LUKE's *history*; though the great *persecution*, which he speaks of^y, might, perhaps, be abated sooner; yet it could not be quite over, 'till several years after *Saul's* conversion. For he was returned from *Damascus* to *Jerusalem*, before the persecution ceased; which was not 'till above three years after his conversion. And, finally; as this rest of the *christian churches* was very extensive, even all over *Judæa*, *Galilee*, and *Samaria*; and so complete, as that the *christians* had no molestation; so considerable an event must have been oweing to some other considerable event, with which the whole people of that countrie were affected. The conversion of a *young man*, not vested with the supreme authority; and who had onely persecuted, under the direction and influence of others, could never have occasioned so general a tranquillity. But, as most, or all, of the *persecutions* of the *christians* had hitherto proceeded from the *jews*; a case, which so deeply affected *that nation*, was enough to ingage their attention to what more nearly concerned themselves; and to occasion so extensive and complete a tranquillity to the *christians*, who lived among them.

Dureing this interval, several of the *christians*, who had been scattered by the *persecution*, ventured to return again to *Jerusalem*.

C H A P. X.

St. PETER re-visits the churches, in Judæa, Galilee, and Phœnicia. Acts ix. 32, to the end of that chapter

AS St. PETER had gone formerly through the metropolis, and other towns of *Samaria*, to plant, or water, *christianity*; and, particularly, by the laying on of his hands, to impart, unto the *christians*, that grand and confirming evidence of the *gift* of the *holy spirit*; so, dureing this peaceful interval, he revisiteth the several churches, in *Judæa*, and *Galilee*; to rectifie their disorders,

^y Acts viii. 1. and xi. 19.

to instruct them farther, and to impart the *holy spirit* to the new converts.

Among other places, he went down to the *christian brethren*, who dwelt at *Lod*, or *Lydda*, a town situated in the tribe of *Ephraim*. They had, very probably, been converted to *christianity* by *Philip*; as he went along, preaching the *gospel*, in all the towns and cities from *Azotus* to *Cæsarea*. For *Lydda* was a large village, or town, of *Phœnicia*, that lay between *Azotus* and *Cæsarea*. It was, afterwards called *Diospolis*. There St. PETER found a man, whose greek name was *Æneas*; but (according to *Grotius*) his *hebrew* name was *Hillel*. He had been eight years bed-ridden with a palsy; to whom the APOSTLE went in, and spoke thus: "*Æneas*, JESUS of Nazareth, who is the *messiah*, healeth you of your disorder. Arise, therefore; and, as an evidence of the certainty and perfection of your cure, make your own bed; which you have for many years been unable to do." [In working this *miracle*, St. PETER seemeth to have imitated OUR LORD; partly as to the manner of expression; but principally as to the sign and evidence of the perfection of the *miracle*. [Mark ii. 9. John v. 8.] Onely with this remarkable difference and decorum; namely, that the two men, whom OUR LORD cured, were not at their own home. And, therefore; they were ordered to take up their bed (or the couch, on which they had laid) and walk away; but *Æneas*, whom St. PETER cured, was at home, and kept his bed, there. And, therefore, he was ordered to arise, and make his bed.] Upon these words of St. PETER, *Æneas* immediately rose up; and found himself perfectly sound and well.—*Sharon* [or *Saron*] was (not a town, but) a large, fruitful, and well-inhabited, valley; which lay near *Lydda*, and is said to have extended from *mount Tabor* to the lake of *Tiberias*, and from *Cæsarea* to *Joppa*. Upon this miraculous cure of *Æneas*, many of the inhabitants of *Lydda*, and of the large valley of *Sharon*, were roused to attend to the *christian doctrine*; and convinced, upon examination, of it's truth and excellence. Upon which, they unanimously imbraced the *gospel*. At *Joppa* also, another city of *Phœnicia*, lying upon the *mediterranean*, a neighboring town to *Lydda*, there were already some *christians*: converted (most probably) by the *evangelist Philip*, in the above mentioned journey; that is, from *Azotus* to *Cæsarea*. At *Lydda*, there were famous schools of the *jews*; and at *Jabneh*, or *Jamnia*, nigh *Joppa*, the great *san-*

An. Christⁱ
40.
Calig. 4:
Book. I.
Ch. X.
Acts ix.
32, &c.

An. Christi ^{40.} *bedrim* did sometimes sit. ^a And yet, for all their consultations, authority, and learning, *christianity* did there take root, and flourish. *Joppa* was, indeed, a remarkable place, upon many accounts. There *Jonas*, the prophet, took ship, when he fled to *Tarshish*, from the presence of the LORD. ^b And it was the nearest maritime town to *Jerusalem*, though computed to have been at the distance of forty miles from it. *Simon*, son to *Mattathias*, and brother to *Judas Maccabæus*, who was both *high-priest* and *prince* of the *jews*; after he had made peace and alliance with *Demetrius*, son to *Demetrius*, king of *Syria*, repaired and fortified *Joppa*, and made it a seaport to *Jerusalem*, and all *Judæa*; it being the fittest place, on all that coast, for the carrying on of their trade, to all the *isles*, and *countries*, in the *mediterranean*. ^c For which purpose it served them, many ages after the *Maccabees*: as it still serveth the inhabitants of that country, to this very day; being called by the same name, though the vulgar pronunciation hath changed it to *Jaffa*. — Among the *christians* at *Joppa*, there was a woman, whose *hebrew* name was *Tabitha*; which in *greek* is *Dorcas*: [that is, a *roe*, or *wild goat*. For it was common among the *hebrews* to call men, or women, by the names of some *inferior animal*. ^d] This *Dorcas* had been one, who abounded in good works, and was exceeding liberal to the poor. But, when *St. PETER* was at *Lydda*, she was sick, and died. After which, they washed her corpse, according to an antient custom, both among the *hebrews*, *greeks*, and *latins*; (which is still in practice among us;) and then laid her in an upper room. The *christians* at *Joppa*, having sustained such a losse; such an ornament to their *religion*, which was then in it's tender state of infancy; and one, who had been so very useful in her place and station; and *Lydda* being onely about six miles from *Joppa*; they, understanding that the *APOSTLE PETER* was there, sent messengers unto him, intreating him

Ver. 35. ^a See Dr. *Lightfoot's* works, vol. 1. p. 284. & vol. 2. p. 16, 17. But Dr. *Whitby*, on 2 *Theff.* ii. 4. denies that the great *sanhedrim* sat at *Jabneh*.

Ver. 36. ^b *Jonah* i. 3. ^c 1 *Maccab.* xiv. 5; 34. *Prideaux* his connection, vol. 2. p. 283. edit. 8vo. 1718.

^d Thus *Rachel* signifieth a *sheep*, and *Eglah* a *calf*. Dr. *Shaw* (in the supplement to his travels, p. 74.) takes *Δορκας* to be the *Gazel*, or *Antelope*; “which *Aristotle* describes to be the smallest of the horned animals, — being even smaller than the *roe*. The *Δορκας* is described to have fine eyes: and, in the eastern countries, those of the *Gazel* are so to a proverb. The damsel, whose name was *Tabitha*, which is by interpretation *Dorcas*, might be called so, from this particular feature, and circumstance.”

him to come to them without delay, To which he readily consented. And, being come into the house of *Dorcas*, and conducted into the upper room, where they had laid the corpse; there all the widows stood round about him, weeping; and lamenting the losse of their charitable neighbor: very much extolling her for her industry and liberality, and even showing him some of the under and upper garments, which she, with her own hands, had made, to cloathe the naked, and relieve the poor. But the APOSTLE desired them all to withdraw a little. And, kneeling down, not far from the corpse, he prayed: [probably, that so useful a person, and such an ornament to christianity, might be restored to life again.] And, knowing certainly, by a *divine impulse*, that his prayer was heard, he turned to the body, and said; "*Tabitha*, arise." Upon which, she opened her eyes; and, looking upon the APOSTLE, she attempted to sit up. Then he took hold of her hand, and helped her up. And, calling in all the *christians*, and the mourning widows, he presented her to them, alive and well. The report of this *miracle* spread swiftly through all *Joppa*. Upon which, *Simon*, the son of *Jonas*, became more famous there, than *Jonas* himself had been. For the antient prophet, *Jonas*, after he had taken ship at *Joppa*, was raised onely from the belly of the whale. But *Simon*, the son of *Jonas*, raised the pious and charitable *Tabitha* from the dead; and thereby promoted a *religion* of greater and more extensive usefulness, than even the beneficent work of reducing *Nineveh* to repentance.

After this, St. PETER tarried several days at *Joppa* lodging in the house of one *Simon*, a tanner; whose house stood by the sea-shore.

Thus endeth the *first book* of the *history of the first planting of the christian religion*; containing the *first grand period*, in which the *gospel* was preached to the *jews* onely. — This *period* began at the day of *pentecost*, when the *spirit* was poured out, soon after the ascension of OUR LORD; and is computed to have lasted 'till the year of CHRIST 41; that is, about the space of eight years.

'Till such of the *jews*, as would imbrace *christianity*, were brought in: especially the *jews* in *Palæstine*; GOD, in his great wisdom and goodness, would not suffer the *gospel* to be offered to one *gentile*. But, when such great numbers were gathered in, and

An. Christi
41.
Claud. 1.
Book I.
Ch. X.
Acts ix.
38, &c.

An. Christi the APOSTLES had gone a second time to visit and settle the
 41. churches; when christianity had taken root among them, and they
 Claud. 1. were sufficiently instructed and established; and when, at the
 Book I. same time, the providence of GOD had so ordered things, that
 Ch. X. the persecution was ceased; and the christians in Judæa, Galilee,
 Acts ix. and Samaria, had so extensive and complete a tranquillity: —
 ult. Then, I say, and not 'till then, the same divine wisdom and good-
 ness prepared the way for the spreading of the gospel among the
 devout gentiles. — The more particular account of which, will
 be the subject of book the second.

The end of the FIRST BOOK.

T H E

T H E
H I S T O R Y
O F T H E
F I R S T P L A N T I N G
O F T H E
C H R I S T I A N R E L I G I O N, & C.

B O O K I I.

Containing an account of the spreading of christianity among the devout gentiles, (whom the jews commonly called proselytes of the gate :) together with it's farther progresse among the jews: that is, from the year of OUR LORD 41, to the year 44. and from Acts xth to the end of the xiith chapter.

C H A P. I.

*The conversion of the devout gentiles at Cæsarea.
Acts x. 1. — xi. 18.*

S E C T. I.

The distinction between proselytes of righteousness, and proselytes of the gate: And what things each of them were obliged to, antecedent to their imbraceing christianity. Acts x. 1.

TH E jews, in all nations, as well as in *Judæa*, were obliged to pay a great regard to their own religion and polity, antecedent to the appearance of the gospel-doctrine in the world. And, though the jews, in *Judæa*, who imbraced the christian religion, continued under obligations to the moral and political part of the Mosaic

An. Christi
41.
Claud. 1.
Book II.
Ch. I.
Sect. I.
Acts x. 1.

An. Christi *Mosaic law*; yet I look upon them to have been absolved from the
 41. Claud. I. *ceremonial part*, immediately upon their becoming *christians*: provid-
 ed they had understood their liberty; and could have got over the
 Book II. scruples and præjudices, which had grown up, with them, from
 Ch. I. their infancy. 'Till they could shake off their præjudices, they were
 Sect. I. indulged, and permitted to continue in the observation of the *ceremo-*
 Acts x. I. *nial law*. The *jewish christians*, in other nations, did undoubtedly
 continue under obligations to obey the *civil law* of the country, where
 they lived; and the *moral law* was still obligatory upon them, both
 from the reason of things, and as it is adopted into the *christian law*.
 But they appear to me to have been absolved, both from the *political*,
 and *ceremonial*, parts of the *jewish law*, upon their imbracing *chris-*
tianity; provided they could have got over their scruples. Otherwise
 they, also, were indulged in the continued use of their antient rites and
 customs. What hath been thus briefly said of the *jews*, holds equal-
 ly true of the *profelytes of justice*, or *righteousnesse*. But, in order
 to give a more clear account of *this period*; and of some things,
 which are to be related in the *next book*; it is necessary to inquire
 more particularly, "Who the *devout gentiles* were? And to what
 " *laws* they were obliged, antecedent to their becoming *chris-*
 " *tians*?"

There were two sorts of *profelytes* among the *jews*; namely,
profelytes of the covenant, who were also called *profelytes of jus-*
tice, or *righteousnesse*; and *profelyte-inhabitants*, or *profelytes of the*
gate.

The *profelytes of the covenant* (who were also called *profelytes of*
justice, or *righteousnesse*) were such persons, as had descended from
gentile parents; but had consented to be circumcised, and so had
 bound themselves to observe the whole *law* of *Moses*. They differed
 in nothing from other *jews*, except onely that they had not descended
 from *jewish* parents. Their *religion*, duties, liberties, and privileges,
 were exactly the same with those of the *natural jews*; ^a according to
 that known rule, [*Exod. xii. 49.*] "One law shall be to him that is
 " home-borne, and unto the stranger that sojourneth among you."

Which

Ver. 1. ^a Thus *Josephus* saith, of the *Idumæans*, that, when they were circumcised,
 and submitted to live according to the law, — from that time they became *jews*.
 [*Antiq. Jud. l. 13. c. 9. § 1.*] προσήλυτος ὁ περιτεμνόμενος, εἰ τῷ λαῷ προσκεχώρηκεν,
 ἔστω ὡς αὐτόχθων. A circumcised profelyte, seeing he is joined to the people [of the jews,]
 is like one that is home-borne. [*Justin. Martyr. Dial. cum Trypho. p. 351. C. Paris*
edit. 1636.]

The proselytes of the gate.

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Which *maxim* related to the *proselytes of righteousness*; as evidently ap-
eth from *ver.* 43, 44, 45; 48. We have, therefore, in the course
of this *history*, all along considered them as *jews*. They were call-
ed *proselytes of righteousness*, or of *the covenant*; because the *jews*
accounted them more *righteous* than the other sort of *proselytes*; as
they had been *circumcised*, and bound themselves to observe the *whole*
law, or *covenant*.

An. Christi.
41.
Claud. 1.
Book II.
Ch. I.
Sect. I.
Acts x. 1.

A *proselyte of the gate*, was sometimes by the *jews* called a *proselyte-inhabitant*. And, in the fourth commandment, he is called a *stranger within their gates*. He was borne of *gentile* parents, and continued *uncircumcised*: but was distinguished from the *idolatrous gentiles*, by his having renounced *idolatry*, and worshipping the one *true GOD*, the *GOD of Israel*. If he had not done so, he could not have been permitted to have been an *inhabitant* of the cities, or *within the gates*, of the *jews*; that is, to come and settle, or sojourn, for any time, among the *jews*, in *Palæstine*. For, according to the *law of Moses*, the *jewish* government was a *theocracy*. And, as *GOD* was their king, *idolatry* was high treason; and, therefore, punished with death. They were called *proselyte-inhabitants*, *proselytes of the gate*, or *strangers within their gates*; as they were permitted, upon certain terms, to live in *Judæa*; or within the gates, or borders, of the *jews*. But, besides their acknowledgeing the *one true GOD*; complying with things of eternal, unalterable obligation; and observing the necessary laws of *civil society*; they were also obliged to some things, peculiar to the *jewish polity*: that is, They were carefully to abstain from whatever was likely to tempt them to forsake *the true GOD*; or would have made them look like *idolators*. And those prohibitions were particularly four. “ (1.) That they should abstain
“ from *things offered to idols*; that is, from any meats, or drinks, de-
“ voted to *an idol*; or that had been offered, before the *image*, private-
“ ly, or in the *idol's temple*. (2.) From *blood*, separated from the flesh
“ of any animal; either pure, or mixed with any thing else. (3.)
“ From eating the flesh of such creatures, as had been *strangled*,
“ with a design to keep the blood in them. For, by eating, and
“ drinking, such things, the *heathens* imagined that they held
“ communion with their *idol-gods*. (4.) From all sorts of *lewdness*,
“ or *venereal uncleanness*; that is, from whatever the *law of Moses* had
“ described and prohibited as such. For instance, the marrying
“ within the prohibited degrees of consanguinity; as well as *adul-*
tery.

An. Christi 41. Claud. 1. Book II. Ch. I. Sect. I. Acts x. 1. "tery, incest,"^b &c. It is shocking to consider that the *abominations*, mentioned Lev. xviii. were practised by the *heathens*, even in the worst of those instances; as part of their *worship*, performed to some or other of their *idols*. [See *Wisd.* xiv. 20, — 27. 2 *Maccab.* vi. 4.] But certainly they were, therefore, with great reason, prohibited unto such, as were separated from the world; to keep up the knowledge of the *true GOD*, and to avoid the temptations to, and concomitants of, *idolary*.

They, who would see the proofs at large, may consult Dr. *Spencer*; and compare him with what hath since been advanced, by the *ingenious author of Miscellanæa sacra*. But I will more briefly endeavor to show, that these four things were prohibited to the *profelytes of the gate*; Lev. xvii, and xviii.

That, by the *strangers that sojourn among you*, [Lev. xvii. 8; 10; 12, 13.] are not meant *profelytes of righteousness*, is highly probable. (1.) Because (though *profelytes of righteousness* went, sometimes, under that general appellation; yet) there was no occasion here to distinguish them from the *jews*. For, according to the above-mentioned rule, [Exod. xii. 49.] "there was one and the same law to the home-borne, or natural, *jew*; and to them." And, therefore, they are included among *persons of the house, or children, of Israel*; ver. 3; 5; 8; 10; 12, 13, 14. (2.) The *profelytes of the gate* might offer *burnt-offerings*, and *sacrifices of peace-offerings*. [Lev. xxii. 18, &c. Numb. xv. 8; 14, 15. Isa. lvi. 6, 7. compared with Mark xi. 17.] But it does not appear that they were allowed to offer *sin-offerings*, or *trespasse-offerings*. And, as no *offering* is mentioned, [Lev. xvii. 8.] but what the *profelytes of the gate* might offer; it is probable that they are the persons meant, by that phrase, *The stranger*

^b *Incest* is called πορνεία, *fornication*; 1 Cor. v. 1. *Adultery* is so called, Matt. v. 32. and xix. 9. Rev. ii. 20, 21. compared with ver. 22. And ἐκπορνέυσασθαι is used for *sodomy*, (as some think) Jude, ver. 7. "The writers of the new testament seem to use the greek word πορνεία, which we translate *fornication*, in the same sense that the *hebrews* used זנות [zenuth,] which we also translate *fornication*. Though it is evident that both these words, in sacred scripture, have a larger sense, than the word *fornication* hath, in our english language. For זנות [zenuth,] among the *hebrews*, signified [turpitudinem, vel rem turpem] *uncleanness*, or any *flagitious, scandalous crime*: but, more especially, the *uncleanness of unlawful copulation*, and *idolatry*; and not precisely *fornication*, in our sense of the word; that is, the unlawful mixture of an unmarried couple." [See Mr. *Locke*, on 1 Cor. v. 1. *Spencer. dissertat.* in Act. xv. 20. c. 1. § 2. & *Selden de jure nat. & gent.* c. 12.]

I apprehend that πορνεία signified *idolatry*, onely in a secondary, or figurative, sense: namely, as *idolatry* was *spiritual fornication*, or *adultery*; a being inamored with false gods;

er that sojourneth among you. For, if the *profelytes of righteousness* had been intended; why was not a *sin-offering*, and a *trespasse-offering*, mentioned; as well as a *burnt offering*, and *sacrifice* [of *peace-offering*?] (3.) It is well known that the *profelytes of the gate* thought themselves obliged by these laws, and did actually abstain from these four things. And, indeed, there were sufficient reasons why such prohibitions should extend to them. For they were not onely to renounce *idolatry*; but the usual concomitants of it, and temptations to it; or any thing which might make them suspected by the *jews*. [Rev. ii. 14.] It is given as a reason, by GOD himself, why he cast out the wicked *Canaanites*; [Lev. xviii. 24, &c.] namely, "because they defiled the land with these abominations." And he warned the new inhabitants to abstain from such things, lest he should also cast them out. Which reason evidently extended to the *profelytes of the gate*; as well as to the *jews*, and *profelytes of righteousness*.

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41.
Claud. I.
Book II.
Ch. I.
Sect. I.
Acts x. 1.

If it should be doubted, "whether the phrase, *his people*, [Lev. xvii. 9.] could agree to the *profelytes of the gate*;" it ought to be remembered, that, if any of *them* had fallen into *idolatry*, in *Judaea*, he must have suffered *death*: and, in that case, might, very properly, have been said to have been cut off from among *his people*; that is, from among that people, where he was permitted to live, and enjoy the privileges of civil society, as long as he behaved in conformity to the laws of that *polity*. But farther; [Deut. xiv. 21.] the *profelytes of the gate* are planely distinguished from *aliens*, or *men of other nations*. Which is, in effect, an acknowlegeing them to have been members of the *jewish nation*.

Suppose it should again be objected, "that, by a *stranger*, Lev. xvii. 15. must be understood a *profelyte of righteousness*? because "a *profelyte of the gate* might eat that which died of itself, or that "which was torne by beasts. [Deut. xiv. 21.] Whereas; such "things were prohibited to the *profelytes of righteousness*; who were, "in all respects, to behave like a *natural jew*. And if, by a *stranger*, "er, be understood a *profelyte of righteousness*, in one part of that

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G g

chapter;

gods; and a being false to the true GOD, whom they had espoused; and with whom they had, as it were, contracted a marriage-covenant. — I have, therefore, in what followeth, used the word in it's primary sense onely.

So the *challee* explains it. [See Ainsworth on Lev. xvii. 8.] As to the different ceremonies, used in these different sorts of sacrifices; see Mr. Taylor's *scripture doctrine of atonement*, p. 8, &c. As to the difference of the sacrifices themselves; see Dr. Sykes his *essay on the nature, &c. of sacrifices*, p. 269. &c.

An. Christi 41. "chapter; why not every where? Or, how shall we distinguish,
 Claud. I. "when it meaneth one sort of *proselyte*, and when the other?"

Book II. *Answer.* This phrase, [*the stranger that sojourned among the Is-*
 Ch. I. *raelites,*] is a general expression; and used of both sorts of *proselytes*.
 Sect. I. The sense and connection, therefore, must determine which sort is
 Acts x. I. any where meant. To me it appeareth, upon considering many of
 the places, where the *stranger* is spoken of, that it means the *prose-*
lyte of the gate; unlesse where some circumstance is added, which
 is inconsistent with that meaning, and determines it to signifie a *pro-*
selyte of righteousness. And I would propose it as a *query*, (which
 well deserveth to be examined, by such learned men, as make the
scriptures their study) 'Whether the phrase, [*a stranger, that sojourn-*
ed among the Israelites,] doeth not always signifie a *proselyte of the*
gate; unlesse there be some circumstance added, which restricteth it
 'to the other sort of *proselytes*? Just as the word *gentiles*, signifieth
 'idolators, in the new testament; unlesse there be something, in
 'the context, which restraineth the meaning of that word to the
 'devout *gentiles*? Of which last, there will not, upon examina-
 'tion, be found a great many instances; though some such there
 'evidently are.'

"(1.) The *eating things offered to idols* is forbid to the *Israelites*.
 "[Lev. xvii. 1, — 7.] And to prevent this, they were ordered,
 "whilest in the wilderness, to kill no beast, even for common
 "food, but what was devoted to the LORD, and slain *at the door of*
 "the *tabernacle of the congregation*. This is forbid to the *proselytes*
 "of the *gate*, also; ver. 8, 9. (2.) *Blood* is expressly forbid, both
 "to the *Israelites*, and to the *proselytes of the gate*; ver. 10, 11, 12:
 "(3.) *Things strangled*, with a design to keep the *blood* in them, are
 "prohibited to both of them; ver. 13. And, (4.) *Fornication*,
 "that is, every sort of lewdness, or venereal uncleanness, is prohi-
 "bited, very particularly, both to the *Israelites*, and to the *proselytes of*
 "the *gate*. [Lev. xviii. See ver. 6, — 26.]"

When the *jews* were an independent nation, and in flourishing cir-
 cumstances, they did, indeed, arbitrarily require more, from the *pro-*
selytes of the gate. But, upon their renouncing *idolatry*, observing
 the eternal *law of nature*, the necessary laws of civil society, and
 these four prohibitions, peculiar to that *polity*; GOD himself, in the
law of Moses, required no more of them. But, upon such a con-
 formity, they had several privileges of a civil nature, among the
jews; as well as full liberty to join, in all such acts of *religious wor-*
ship, as were not peculiar to the *jews*; but used among the *patriarchs*,
 before

before the giving of the law of Moses. [See what is said in the *An. Christi* apostolic constitutions, concerning this, book 6. chap. 12. as quoted ^{41.} Claud. 1. in the essay concerning abolishing of the ceremonial law, annexed to Titus, Book II. chap. iii. § 1. at the end.] Ch. I. Sect II. Acts x. 2.

C H A P. I. S E C T. II.

The devout gentiles, mentioned in the Acts of the APOSTLES, were, very probably, the same with the profelytes of the gate. Acts x. 2.

HAVING shown what the law of Moses required, both of the circumcised and uncircumcised *profelytes*; we proceed to show that the *devout gentiles* (of whom so much will be related, in the course of this history) were, most probably, *profelytes of the gate*. (1.) As they lived among the *jews*. And we read of very few, or none, at a great distance from Jerusalem; unless it was in a *jewish synagogue*, or *proseucha*. "Some may, perhaps, suppose that they might become acquainted with the true God, by conversing with the *jews*; and yet not conform to any *jewish customs*." I own the thing was possible. But, if we consider how apt men are to imitate those, whom they reverence; and by whom they have been instructed, in any important article of religion; and how industrious the *jews* were, in making *profelytes*; we shall scarce believe that the generality of them stopt short, and never became *profelytes* of any sort. And the facts, recorded in the new testament, seem plainly to represent the *devout gentiles* as *profelytes*. For, (2.) They prayed at the temple-hours of prayer, and attended the synagogue-service. Such a conformity to *jewish customs*, could hardly be expected, from such as had merely cast off idolatry; unless they had also been *profelytes* to the *jewish* religion, in some kind, or degree. (3.) In preaching to the *devout gentiles*, the APOSTLES referred them to the prophecies of the old testament; which they never did, when they attempted to convert idolatrous gentiles. Now, unless they had been *profelytes of the gate*, and acquainted with the old testament, by reading it in private, or by hearing it read in the synagogue, every sabbath-day; what account can be given of the

An. Christi
 41.
 Claud. 1.
 Book H.
 Ch. I.
 Sect. III.
 Acts x.
 I, &c.

APOSTLES appealing to the *prophecies*, in order to convert them? Would any man, of common sense, (much less one, who had also the *apostolic illumination*) appeal to *prophecies*, for the confirmation of any thing, among such as were unacquainted with them, or did not allow their authority? (4.) They are called *σεβόμενοι προσήλυτοι*, *The religious, or devout, proselytes*. [Acts xiii. 43.] Now, there were only two sorts of *proselytes*, among the *jews*: and these, about whom we are here inquiring, appear to have been, not the *circumcised*, but the *uncircumcised*, or *proselytes of the gate*. For such *devout gentiles* will be found, hereafter, to be promiscuously called, *such as feared, and worshiped, GOD*; or, *devout proselytes*. [See Acts x. 2; 7; 22; 35. and xiii. 16; 26; 43.]

C H A P. I. S E C T. III.

St. PETER was to preach first to the gentiles: though he appeareth, hitherto, not to have thought of such a thing. Cæsarea the place where, and Cornelius the person, with whom, he was to begin. Cornelius his vision of an angel; who orders him to send for the APOSTLE PETER. Acts x. 1, — 8.

TH E christian religion haveing been planted in *Jerusalem*, *Judæa*, and *Samaria*; and sent, by the *eunuch*, into *Æthiopia*, one of the uttermost parts of the earth; according to OUR LORD's expresse order, [Acts i. 8.] and haveing now been preached, about eight years, to the *jews* only; GOD, in his wise and merciful providence, disposed things, for the preaching it, among the *gentiles*. And, as he always made the most gentle and natural gradations; the next transition was to the *devout gentiles*, within the borders of *Palæstine*. These glad tidings of great joy had been already carried to *Cæsarea*, by *Philip*; who was one of the seven *deacons*, and an *evangelist*; and who (most probably) settled there, soon after he had converted the *Æthiopian eunuch*. But *Philip*, like all the other preachers of the *gospel*, had hitherto preached to none but to the *jews* only. As St. PETER was travelling through the towns and villages of *Palæstine*

Palæstine; especially such as lay nigh, or upon, the coasts of the *mediterranean*, the places, in which *Philip* had planted the *gospel*: — As St *PETER*, I say, was going over those places, establishing such as had imbraced the *christian doctrine*, and converting others; he received orders, immediately from heaven, to enter upon the great work of the conversion of the *gentiles*. This eminent *APOSTLE* was, for his right and early profession of *JESUS* his being the *MESSIAH*, (or the *great prophet*, sent into the world, to open a new state of things, by the *gospel*;) surnamed *PETER*, which signifieth a *rock*; as he was to be the *rock*, upon which the *christian church* was to be built; or was first to lay the foundation of the *christian church*: and, as *OUR LORD* foresaw his future steddiness and constancy, in the profession and support of the truth. — By another figure of speech, the *keys of the kingdom of heaven* are said to have been committed unto him; as he was first to open the door of faith, both to the jews and gentiles; and to admit, into *CHRIST'S* kingdom, all those, among them, who were duely qualified for it. He had, accordingly, some years ago, laid the foundation of the *christian church*, among the jews; or opened the door of faith to them. [*Acts* ii. 14, &c.] But it had not once entered into his head, that he was to do so, among the gentiles; while they continued *uncircumcised*. He did, indeed, since the effusion of the *spirit*, fully understand that *CHRIST'S* was not a temporal, but a spiritual, kingdom; ruleing over the consciences of men; and not designed to transfer the monarchy of the world, from *Rome*, to *Jerusalem*. But he did not think that *GOD* would receive any, as members of that kingdom; except the jews, who had, for so many ages, been the peculiar people of *GOD*: that holy nation, which *GOD* had so long, and so remarkably, distinguished from other nations; styleing himself their *GOD*, in an especial manner. And he knew, that such gentiles, as became *profelytes of righteousness*, were to be treated as jews. But the *uncircumcised gentiles*, even such of them as were *profelytes of the gate*, were looked upon, as polluted and unclean^a: so far from being worthy to be accepted into the number of the people of *GOD*, that, unlesse they would be *circumcised*, they reckoned them too impure for a jew to eat and drink with, or to have any familiar conversation with them.^b Nay; the more zealous jews

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41.

Claud. 1.

Book II.

Ch. I.

Sect. III.

Acts x.

1, 2.

Ver. 2. ^a 2 *Esdras*, vi. 55, 56, 57. The jews looked upon a sojourning profelyte, as a gentile to all purposes. [Vid. *Jerus. Jebamoth*. fol. 8. col. 4. as quoted by Dr. Lightfoot, vol. 1. p. 285. of his works.]

^b Compare, with this place, *Matt.* xviii. 17. *Acts* xi. 3. and *I Cor.* v. 11.

An. Christi

41.

Claud. 1.

Book II.

Ch. I.

Sect III.

Acts x.

1, 2.

jews would not suffer them to live quietly among them, whenever they had power; unlesse they would become *profelytes of righteousness*: even though GOD had, in their *law*, commanded them to receive such, into their nation; and to suffer them to live, among them, undisturbed. It was indeed, *prophefied*, in the old testament, that, in *Abraham's seed*, *all the nations of the earth should be blessed*; and that the MESSIAH should be *a light to enlighten the gentiles, as well as the glory of GOD's people, Israel*. But it was not said, on what terms the *gentiles* should be accepted. The *jews*, therefore, (who were ever ready to interpret *prophecies*, according to what they wished; and so violently præjudiced to their own nation, and against the *uncircumcised gentiles*) took it for granted, that such of the *gentiles*, as should be accepted into the *messiah's kingdom*, must be first circumcised, and become *profelytes of righteousness*; and that the rest must be slaves, or tributaries, to the *jewish* nation. OUR LORD, who was of a more humane and benevolent *spirit*, took the most wise methods, gently to root such inveterate præjudices, out of the minds of his disciples: particularly, by the beautiful parable of the *prodigal son*; by that of the *vineyard*, let out to husbandmen; and that of the *laborers*, hired into the vineyard; as well as by many other of his discourses. By which, he insinuated the rejection of the body of the *jewish* nation, for their impenitence and disobedience; and the reception of the penitent, and virtuous, among the *gentiles*. But, as they were deeply tinctured with the national præjudices; and those were truths, not onely contrary to all their former sentiments, but highly disagreeable and distasteful to them; they either could not, or would not, understand him. In giving the APOSTLES their first commission, their præjudices were considered; and they were sent, "onely to the lost sheep of the house of *Israel*." In their last commission, which was for life, they were ordered to "go to *all nations*, to preach the *gospel* to every creature; and to be witnesses, unto OUR LORD, not onely in *Jerusalem, Judæa, and Samaria*; but also unto the *uttermost parts of the earth*." However; the commission was delivered in such general terms, and their minds were so narrow, and so much bigoted to their own nation, that they, for all that, continued ignorant of the extent of their commission; and understood it, either as extending to the *jews* of the several *nations*, or divisions, of *Judæa* onely; or, at the farthest, to the *jews*, where-ever dispersed, over the face of the whole earth. OUR LORD bore with these præjudices, for about eight years, after his ascension, and the first effusion of the *holy spirit*; their minds not being able sooner to bear the discovery. For had the

gospel

gospel been preached to the *gentiles*, before it had taken root among the *jews*; in all probability, the *jewish converts* would have been so shocked, as to have been almost ready to quit *christianity* itself. But, now, the harvest of the *jews* being gathered in, the time was come, when, in JESUS CHRIST, the true seed of *Abraham*, all nations were to be blessed; and those made a people, whom the *jews* had not accounted his people; and the persons treated as beloved of GOD, who had not been treated as GOD's beloved. St. PETER was to lead the way. And the remarkable place, to begin at, was *Cæsarea*. There was a town called *Cæsarea-Philippi*, nigh the fountain-head of the river *Jordan*; which was afterwards called *Paneas*. But this was called *Cæsarea-Palæstinae*, as being under the *romans*, the metropolis of *Palæstine*. It was formerly called *Straton's tower*;^c and was then but a small and inconsiderable town, on the borders of *Phœnicia*. But, as it stood by the sea-side, and was a proper place for merchandize; *Herod the great* built a very large city there, with many stately marble buildings; a theatre of stone, and an amphitheatre; (in which it is reckoned that *Herod Agrippa* was struck dead, upon his assuming to himself the glory, which belonged to GOD alone.) The haven being very incommodious, *Herod the great* built, also, a noble haven, with marble edifices and towers. The greatest of which towers, he called *Drusus*, in honor of the *emperor's* kinsman; as he called the city *Cæsarea*, in honor of *Cæsar*, the *emperor* himself. It was situated between *Doron* and *Joppa*, about seventy miles from *Jerusalem*, and about thirty from *Joppa*; and inhabited by a mixture of *jews* and *gentiles*, who were pretty near equal in number. And the *jews* are said to have had several schools, and learned men, there. As *Palæstine* was now in subjection to the *romans*, and this their metropolis in that province; the *roman governor* frequently resided at *Cæsarea*,^d and had there several companies of soldiers, to maintain the *roman* authority, and keep the province in subjection. And, among the rest, there was a company, which went by the name of the *Italian cohort*. A cohort seemeth to have consisted of a thousand soldiers. For over it was a *tribune*, or captain of a thousand.^e And the *Italian cohort* had, probably, been sent, out of *Italy*, for the *governor's* life-guard; and was, perhaps, honored with some marks of esteem and distinction. In that cohort, there was a *centurion*, or captain of an hundred soldiers, *Cornelius*

An. Christi

41.
Claud. 1.

Book II.

Ch. I.

Sect III.

Acts x.

1, 2.

^c Joseph. de Bell. Jud. l. 1. c. 21, § 5, &c. Antiq. l. 15. c. 8. § 5. & c. 9. § 6.^d Acts xxiii. 23, 24. and xxiv. 8.^e The word is σπείρα, which is used, Matt. xxvii. 27. Mark xv. 16. and over it there was χίλιαρχος. John xviii. 12. Acts xxi. 31.

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 41.
 Claud. 1.
 Book II.
 Ch. I.
 Sect. III.
 Acts x.
 1, 2.

nelius by name; who was a *devout gentile*. He had distinguished himself, by his great virtue, piety, and charity; and was well præpared for the reception of the *gospel*: as the *profelytes of the gate* were, in general, above all sorts of people. The *ceremonial law* did most grievously intangle the minds of the *jews*; and, by means of their strong præjudices, their attachment to it degenerated into *superstition*. The *idolatrous gentiles*, by their ignorance and wickedness, which were continued and supported by their *idolatry*, were with much more difficulty brought to imbrace *christianity*. Whereas; the *devout gentiles* had cast off *idolatry*, on the one hand; and, on the other hand, had not submitted to the *ceremonial* part of the *jewish law*.

Thus præpared were they in general. But the uncommon virtues, and great piety, of *Cornelius* rendered him, in particular, a proper person to begin with, among that well-disposed sort of people. He excelled in piety towards GOD, and benevolence towards mankind; even to men of different *sects*, without confining his charity to persons of his own sentiments and party. For he is said to have given much alms^f to the people [of the *jews*;] as well as to have prayed, at those hours of the day, at which the *jews* used to offer up their prayers. [I cannot forbear mentioning, in this place, one instance of the *superstition* of the *jews*. They would readily receive alms from the *devout gentiles*, and accounted their *gifts* sufficiently clean and pure; but they held their persons in abomination; and looked upon them, as rejected of GOD.]

The GREAT GOD, the wise and benevolent governor of reasonable creatures, in pitching upon a person, so pious in himself, and so charitable to the *jews*, made the gradation as gentle as possible; and began with one of the fittest persons in the world, when he was about to unite *jew* and *gentile* into one church and body, through JESUS CHRIST, *the prince of peace*. It was, indeed, with great difficulty, that the *jewish converts* were brought to bear with the admission of one *uncircumcised gentile*. But, if they could bear with the reception of any; they must own, that one of *Cornelius* his virtue and charity was the most proper person, among all the *gentiles*. And, when they came to cool upon it; surely, they could not forbear admiring the divine condescension, in stooping to their præjudices, and so graciously bearing with their infirmities.

Cornelius

^f *Luke xi. 41.* OUR SAVIOR intimates, that this was the way to render all things clean to any person.

Cornelius was one day praying, in private, at the time of the evening sacrifice^g; *that is*, about three a-clock in the afternoon; when, on a sudden, he saw, wakeing, and with his bodily eyes, an *angel* standing before him, cloathed with a glory; who came near him, and called him by his name, "*Cornelius.*" Perhaps he might be praying for the coming of the *kingdom of the messiah*, when the *gentiles* were to be accepted as the people of GOD.^h For the *jews* were then daily looking when that *kingdom* would appear. *Cornelius* looked intently upon *the vision*; and, not without some surprize, said: "What can this mean, LORD?" The *angel* answered: "Thy prayers, and thine alms, are come up before GOD; more grateful than the steam of burnt-incenseⁱ; or of the most costly sacrifice, which thou couldest have offered. But, as a more perfect revelation of the mind and will of GOD will be to thy unspeakable advantage; GOD hath, therefore, dispatched me, with this message, to thee, *Send to the town of Joppa, and inquire for one Simon, surnamed PETER. He lodgeth with one Simon, a tanner; whose house is by the sea-side. When he is come, he will instruct thee in what is proper for thee to know; and direct thee what thou oughtest farther to do.*" Having delivered his message, the *angel* disappeared.

When the *angel* was departed, *Cornelius* called unto him two of his domestic servants; and a soldier, who was a *devout gentile*, and used to attend upon him; and, relating to them, what had happened, in his retirement, he sent them to *Joppa*.

From *Joppa*, the prophet *Jonah* was sent to preach, to the *gentiles*, at *Nineveh*. And, from thence, the APOSTLE, PETER, was sent to preach, to the *gentiles*, at *Cæsarea*.

Ver. 3. ^g Compare, with this, *Dan. ix. 21, &c.*

^h See *ver. 31.* where his particular prayer, which he was offering up, at that time, is said to have been heard.

Ver. 4. ⁱ See Ainsworth on *Lev. ii. 2.*

An. Christi
35.
Claud. 1.
Book II.
Ch. I.
Sect. III.
Acts x.
3. &c.

C H A P. I. S E C T. IV.

St. PETER's vision of the sheet. The decorum observed in erecting CHRIST's spiritual kingdom. The APOSTLE goeth along with the messengers from Cornelius; and six jewish christians, from Joppa, accompanie him. Acts x. 9, — 23.

An. Christi
41.
Claud. 1.
Book II.
Ch. I.
Sect. IV.
Acts x.
9, &c.

THEY set out too late, to reach *Joppa* that night; but the next day, as the messengers of *Cornelius* were upon the road, and just entering the town; St. PETER went up, to the top of the house, to spend some time in retirement and devotion. For (as it hath been observed above^a) the *jews* had two hours in a day, for stated hours of prayer; *namely*, the time of the morning and evening sacrifice. The first of which was about nine a-clock in the morning; and the last, about three in the afternoon. And the more *devout* among them added a third, which was about noon; and which they called the time of the *mincha gedolah*, or the great meat-offering. [See *Psal* lv. 17. *Dan*. vi. 10.] In those *eastern countries*, the roofs of the houses were commonly flat; and the flat roofs, or some of the upper parts of the houses, were the usual places for devout retirement: where it was their custom to pray, with their faces turned towards the temple at *Jerusalem*.^b

As it was about noon, and dinner-time drew on; St. PETER acquainted the family that he was very hungry, and desired them to prepare something for him to eat. But, while they were preparing, he (who continued hitherto a strict observer of the *jewish rituals*) conformed to the custom, and retired to the top of the house for prayer and devotion. During which retirement, a trance, or *extasie*, fell upon him. And in a *vision*, the heavens seemed to open; and something like a large sheet, fastened by the four corners, to be let down to the earth; in which were some of almost all sorts of living creatures, tame and wild; birds, beasts, and reptiles; many of which the

Ver. 9. ^a See on chap. iii. 1. & Joseph. Antiq. l. 14. c. 4, § 3.

^b Dan. vi. 10. 1 Kings viii. 29, 30; 35; 38; 44; 48. *Psal*. cxxxviii. 2. Jonah ii. 4.

the law of Moses had prohibited, to the *jews*, as polluted and unclean. And, along with the vision, there came, from heaven, the voice of the LORD JESUS CHRIST, saying: "Arise, PETER; and (*now thou art hungry*) kill and eat of any of these creatures, without difference, or distinction." St. PETER, not apprehending the design of the vision, answered; "No! LORD, by no means^c. For I have never yet eaten any thing, which is common to the *gentiles*, or unclean to *Israel*. And I intend not so to do, either now, or at any time hereafter." The voice replied: "What GOD hath rendered clean, and pronounced lawful^d, you are no longer to account polluted." To confirm the matter, the thing was done a third time^e; and then the whole apparatus was immediately received up into heaven.

An. Christi
Claud. 1.
Book II.
Ch. I.
Sect. IV.
Acts x.
13, &c.

Before we procede in the *history*, it may not be amiss to reflect upon the propriety and *decorum*, with which things were managed, in erecting CHRIST's *spiritual kingdom*. The LORD JESUS CHRIST himself appeared to Saul; and granted the knowlege of the *gospel*, unto him, by *immediate revelation*: because he was to be, first, a *superior prophet*, and afterwards an APOSTLE. But Cornelius was admonished, by an angel, to send for St. PETER, and hear him preach the *christian doctrine*; because St. PETER was to open the door of faith to the *gentiles*; and Cornelius was not designed for so high an office, in the *christian church*, as Saul. Again: The angel, who appeared to Cornelius, was not sent to preach the *gospel* to him, but onely to order him to send for an APOSTLE, who was one of the *witnesses*, chosen of GOD, to attest the truth of CHRIST's life, miracles, death, and resurrection; and, upon these facts, to found the *christian doctrine*. And, farther: St. PETER did not go of himself, and attempt the conversion of the *uncircumcised gentiles*; even though the body of the *jews* in *Palæstine*, that would imbrace the *gospel*, were gathered in. If he had done so, he would have met with a more severe rebuke, from the zealous *jewish christians*, at *Jerusalem*; and could not have offered half so much in his own vindication. But, as he did not go, 'till he was sent for, and that in so extraordinary a manner; he main-

H h 2

tained

Verse 14. ^c Ezek. iv. 14. Dan. i. 8. Tobit. i. 10, 11, 12.

Verse 15. ^d While the *jews* were to continue a separate nation, they were to observe the distinction of meats; namely, between such as the law had pronounced *clean*, and such as it had prohibited as *unclean*. [Lev. xx. 24, 25, 26.] But here it is intimated that the distinction was to cease; and that GOD himself now abolished the laws, which, in former times, and different circumstances, he himself had made. [See the essay concerning abolishing the ceremonial law, annexed to Titus.]

Ver. 16. ^e Gen. xli. 32.

An. Christi tained the *apostolic dignity*, and could allege the determination of heaven in his favor. And, finally; we may observe that *an angel* was sent to *Cornelius*; but the LORD JESUS CHRIST himself spoke to the APOSTLE, PETER: not onely, as he bore an higher character in the church, than *Cornelius* was to bear; but as he was to execute a new, and a *most extraordinary, commission*. For such that, of beginning to call in the *uncircumcised gentiles*, certainly was.

I apprehend, that OUR LORD, in ordering St. PETER to slay, and eat, of any of the creatures, represented in the *vision*, without difference or distinction, intended to insinuate, that the *jewish christians* were, by the *gospel*, absolved from the *ceremonial law*; and, particularly, from the *jewish* distinction of meats, *clean* and *unclean*: — as well as to teach him, by way of *emblem*, that the *uncircumcised*, and particularly the *devout, gentiles* were no longer to be accounted *unclean*, or unfit for free and familiar conversation with the *jewish christians*; but were to be accepted into the *christian church*, and to all the blessings and privileges of it; as fully and freely as those of the *circumcision*, who imbraced the *gospel*. But, so præjudiced was St. PETER, against understanding it in that sense; and yet so unable to put any other sense upon it; that he did not know what to make of it, 'till the succedeing events taught him to regard it, as an intimation that the *gentiles* were to be admitted into the *church*. Upon his first awakeing out of his *trance*, so strange a *vision* quite astonished him. But, whilst he was ruminating upon it, with great wonder and surprise; behold the messengers from *Cornelius* had found out *Simon's* house; and were at the gate, inquireing, whether SIMON PETER lodged there? Upon which, the spirit directed the APOSTLE himself to go down: for three men at the door wanted him. "Arise, therefore, said he, go down to them. And do not make any scruple^f of going along with them. For the thing is from GOD, and I have sent them." Then St. PETER himself went to the door, and said: "I am the person, for whom you are inquireing; pray, what is it that you want with me?" They answered: "*Cornelius*, a *devout gentile*, an holy and good man, who is highly esteemed, by all the *jews*, that know him; hath had directions from an *holy angel*, to send for you; and to receive orders and instructions, from you." The APOSTLE had them into the house; and there they lodged that night. The next day, he went along with them; and

Ver. 20. ^f Μὴ δὲν διακρίνομεν. Mat. xxi. 21. Mark xi. 23. Rom. iv. 20. James i. 6.

and six *jewish christians* from *Joppa* accompanied him. It is probable, that the APOSTLE himself desired them to go along with him, that they might be *witnesses* of what happened; and might vindicate him, afterwards, to the zealous *jewish christians*, who (as he could easily foresee) were very likely to blame him for *so extraordinary an attempt*.

An. Christi
41.
Claud. 1.
Book II.
Ch. I.
Sect. V:
Acts x.
24, &c.

C H A P. I. S E C T. V.

They arrive at Cæsarea. St. PETER preacheth the gospel to Cornelius, and a considerable number of his friends. Whilest he was speaking, the holy spirit fell down from heaven. The jewish christians were surprized, that gentiles should have the holy spirit. St. PETER orders them to be baptized with water, who had received the baptism of the spirit. He, at their request, tarried with them several days. Acts x. 24, — to the end of that chapter.

ST. PETER, accompanied with *Cornelius* his three messengers, and six *jewish christians*, set out from *Joppa*, and arrived the next day at *Cæsarea*. When the APOSTLE came nigh the city, one of the servants ran before, and signified to *Cornelius* that he was approaching.^a *Cornelius* was impatient for his coming, and big with expectation of some signal event. And, therefore, he had called together his relations and intimate friends, who were *devout gentiles*, as well as himself. And, when he heard that the APOSTLE was just at hand, he went out of his house to meet him. And, approaching him with profound reverence, he fell down at his feet, to worship him. For he had a most exalted idea of that APOSTLE, and looked upon him as the ambassador of the *most high GOD*; or as if he had been something more than a man. The APOSTLE himself, who knew that his message was *divine*, and that he was onely the *medium* of conveyance; with great humility raised him up, saying ::

Ver. 25. ^a See the reading in the *Cambridge manuscript, greek and latin*.

An. Christi ing; "Do not prostrate yourself to me. I am onely a mere man,
 41. as you are; and deserve no such homage." And, after some little
 Claud. 1. conversation at the door, St. PETER went in with him, and found a
 Book II. great company gathered together, waiting for him; to whom he said:
 Ch. I. "You know very well, that (according to the decrees of the wise
 Sect. V. men, and the traditions of the elders, which are generally observed
 Acts x. 28, &c. "by our nation) it is reckoned unlawful for a jew to frequent the
 "house of an uncircumcised gentile; or to eat, and drink, and fa-
 "miliarly converse, with him. And this, 'till within these few days,
 "hath been my own sentiment and practice. But GOD hath lately
 "showed me, that I ought not to put a difference between jews
 "and gentiles; nor to account any man common, or unclean, mere-
 "ly for want of circumcision, and the observation of our ceremonial
 "law. I, therefore, when I was sent for, made no scruple of come-
 "ing hither. And now I desire to know upon what account you have
 "sent for me." Cornelius replied: "Four days ago, I fasted, 'till
 "about this hour of the day. And then, whilst I was praying, in
 "my own house, (according to the custom observed by the jews)
 "behold an angel stood before me, in the shape and appearance of a
 "man, but surrounded with a glory; who said: Cornelius, thy prayer
 "is heard, and thine alms are ascended into the presence of GOD; more
 "grateful than the steam of burnt-incense, or of the most costly sa-
 "crifices. GOD, therefore, out of his great regard to thee, hath sent
 "me, with orders to thee, to send to Joppa, for one Simon, sur-
 "named PETER, who lodgeth with one Simon, a tanner, by the sea-
 "side. For he hath a very important message to deliver unto thee. Im-
 "mediately, therefore, that very evening, added Cornelius, I sent for
 "you; and I think myself highly obliged to you, that you came so
 "readily.^b Now are all this company of us assembled in your pre-
 "sence^c, (as well as in the presence, and under the eye of GOD)
 "attentively to hear whatever message GOD shall send us, by you."
 Then, St. PETER stood up, in a solemn manner, as one about to
 speak upon a very important subject^d; and said: "Under whatever
 "præjudices I have formerly labored, I now perceive, of a truth, that
 "GOD is no respecter of persons, or nations; but that, in every na-
 "tion, as well as among the jews, he, who feareth the TRUE GOD,
 "and

Ver. 33. ^b εὖ γὰρ ἐποίησας ἀπικόμενος you have done well in coming. Herodot.
 1. v. c. 24. [See other passages to the same purpose, in Wolfius, and Westein in loc.]
^c Ἐνώπιον σου, according to some manuscripts and versions. [See Dr. Mill.]
 Ver. 34. ^d Ἀνοίξας δὲ Πέτρος τὸ στόμα. See Psal. lxxviii. 2. Matt. v. 2.

" and practiseth virtue and rightteousnesse, is accepted of him. My
 " present message to you, from GOD, is this: — And it is the very
 " same, which GOD hath, of late years, sent unto the children of Is-
 " rael; declaring the glad tideings of peace and salvation, through
 " JESUS CHRIST, who is LORD of all, ^c gentiles or jews. You must
 " needs have heard something of it: I mean, that doctrine, which
 " was published throughout all Judæa; and which tooke it's rise in
 " Galilee; immediately after the præparatory baptism and ministry of
 " John. What I refer to, is, concerning JESUS of Nazareth; ^f how
 " that (immediately after he had been baptized by John) GOD anoint-
 " ed him with the holy spirit; ^g conferring upon him supernatural gifts
 " and miraculous powers. From which time, he went about doing good,
 " preaching a most excellent doctrine, and working many benefi-
 " cent miracles. For GOD always loved, and assisted, him. ^h You
 " must needs, I say, have heard the report: For these things were not
 " done in a corner. But we, his APOSTLES, were eye-witnesses of
 " his actions and sufferings, both in Galilee; in the country of Ju-
 " dæa, and in the capital city Jerusalem; whom the jews, especially
 " they of Jerusalem, apprehended and crucified. But, within three
 " days, GOD raised him to life again; and showed him openly, se-
 " veral times. Not, indeed, to all the people. For they had render-
 " ed themselves unworthy of such a favor, by their obstinate refuse-
 " al of his doctrine, and disregarding all his former miracles. But,
 " especially, as his particular mission to the jews expired at his death.
 " And GOD had another way in view, of giving to them, and to the
 " whole world, full and sufficient proofs of the truth and reality
 " of his resurrection; by sending out eye-witnesses; who should,
 " at

Ver. 36. ^c Dan. vii. 13, 14.

Ver. 38. ^f It was a proverb among the jews. Can any good thing come out of Naza-
 reth? [John i. 47.] And yet the APOSTLES, once and again, call OUR LORD,
 by the name of JESUS of Nazareth. [Acts ii. 22. and iii. 6. and iv. 10. as well
 as here, and in many other places.] They seem to have mentioned this, as one circum-
 stance of his humiliation. And yet they showed, that the very JESUS of Nazareth,
 of whom the jews had so contemptible an opinion, and had treated so cruelly and igno-
 miniously, was (for all that) a very great and glorious person; and attested to be
 such, in a most remarkable manner; that to him angels bow, and all nature is in sub-
 jection. And, indeed, if we set the prædictions of the prophets; the great expecta-
 tions, which were raised of him, before his coming; the miracles, which he worked;
 his wondrous exaltation, after his leaving our world; and the supernatural gifts and
 powers, which he, though absent, conferred on his APOSTLES, and the primitive
 christians: — If we set all these, I say, over against his poverty, contempt, and suffer-
 ings; the offence of the crosse will cease, and the ignominy of his lowest state of
 humiliation vanish away.

^g Isa. lxi. 1. Luke iv. 18; 21.
19, 20. and xi. 42.

^h Matt. iii. 17. and xvii. 5. John v.

An. Christi
 41.
 Claud. 1.
 Book II.
 Ch. I.
 Sect. V.
 Acts xi.
 35, &c.

The spirit poured out, on their first-fruits.

An. Christi 41. Claud. 1. Book II. Ch. I. Sect. V. Acts x. 41, &c.

“ at the same time, attest the *facts* and found the *doctrine* upon them;
 “ and, by inableing them to confirm their testimony, by signs, and
 “ wonders, and various *miracles*, and *gifts* of the *holy spirit*, bestow-
 “ ed in great plenty, upon them, and upon all such as imbrace the
 “ *gospel*. — For these, I say, and other equally wise reasons, GOD
 “ did not see fit that *his son* should appear, after his resurrection,
 “ unto all the people of the *jews*ⁱ; but onely unto us, his own *dis-*
 “ *ciples*: to five hundred at once; and, by a prævious appointment,
 “ upon a mountain in *Galilee*. But more frequently, and more ef-
 “ pecially, unto us, his APOSTLES, who were witnesses, chosen be-
 “ fore of GOD, to attend him, dureing his life; that we might cer-
 “ tainly know, and be unexceptionable *witnesses*, of his death and
 “ resurrection. And, as we were intimately acquainted with him,
 “ before he died; we had all the assurance of the truth and reality
 “ of his resurrection, that eating, drinking, and free converseing,
 “ with him, for forty days together,^k could afford us. Nay; we
 “ handled his body; and felt the marks of the wounds, which he
 “ received upon the crosse. And, after this full conviction, we re-
 “ ceived an expresse order from him, to go out into the world, and to
 “ testifie that he is the *savior* and governor of all; and that GOD
 “ hath appointed him to be the *judge*, both of the living and of the
 “ dead. As you are *profelytes of the gate*, and attend upon the read-
 “ ing of the *law* and the *prophets*, in the *synagogue*; to those sacred
 “ writings would I refer you. For unto him the *prophets*, in ge-
 “ neral, bear witness, that whosoever believeth and obeyeth his doc-
 “ trine, shall, through his mediation, receive full remission of sins.”—
 While these words were in St. PETER’s mouth, the *holy spirit* fell
 down from heaven, (probably attended with a *glory*; as when it fell
 upon the APOSTLES, and their company, on the famous day of *pen-*
tecost. And, perhaps, a *glory* always attended the immediate effusi-
 on of the *spirit*; from the time of OUR LORD’s baptism, to the call-
 ing in the *idolatrous gentiles*. The *spirit* was poured down, I say,)
 upon *Cornelius*, and his friends; as upon OUR LORD himself, and up-
 on his APOSTLES, and the hundred and twenty; and was not com-
 municated, by the laying on of the hands of the APOSTLES, as it had
 been to the *jews*, and *samaritane converts*. And the reason why
 GOD communicated the *holy spirit*, in this most honorable manner,
 to

Ver. 41. ⁱ See the reasonableness of the christian religion. &c. p. 216, &c. and the
 summary view of the evidences of CHRIST’s resurrection, p. 40, &c.
^k Some MSS. and versions, here, read *τεσσαράκοντα ἡμέρας*, or *ἡμέρας*.

to the first-fruits of the *devout gentiles*, was to remove the præjudices of the *jewish christians*; and to make way for their chearfully receiving the *devout gentiles*, into the *christian church*, and to all it's privileges.

An. Christi
41.
Claud. 1.
Book II.
Ch. I.
Sect. V.

The *jews* had a proverb among them; *That the holy spirit would not dwell upon any heathen; nor even upon any jew, in an heathen country.*¹ And, accordingly, the *prophets* had hitherto commonly risen in *Israel*, and not among the *uncircumcised gentiles*. The *jewish christians*, therefore, that had come along with St. PETER, from *Joppa*, to be eye-witnesses of this great event, were quite surprized, to see that the *divine gift* of the *holy spirit* was poured down upon *gentiles*. For, they presently found that this effusion did produce like effects upon them, as it had done upon the *jewish converts*; *Cornelius*, and his company, immediately exercising the *gift of tongues*; (most probably, in repeteing and explaineing some part of the old testament, in the *original language*;) and magnifying GOD, by singing *psalms*, or *hymns*, or *spiritual songs*, by immediate inspiration. This evident and remarkable effusion of the *spirit*, upon *uncircumcised gentiles*, after *Cornelius* had had the *vision* of an *angel*, and himself the *signal vision of the sheet*; took away all St. PETER's scruples; who now said: "Can any man, how strongly soever he might formerly be præjudiced against such a thing, any longer hæsitare, or offer one just reason, why these *uncircumcised gentiles* should not be *baptized*; seeing they have received the *baptism* of the *holy spirit*, in the same honorable manner, that we, CHRIST'S APOSTLES, and *first converts*, have received it?" And, no objection being offered, by any of the *jewish christians*, who had come along with him, St. PETER immediately ordered water to be made ready; and those *gentiles* to be *baptized*, by some of these very brethren, in the name of the LORD JESUS CHRIST. For, as they were *devout gentiles*, they already believed in the *one true GOD*: and had, just before, been *baptized* with the effusion of the *holy spirit*. — Thus St. PETER, who, as the *rock*, on which the *christian church* was to be built; and, as *haveing the keys of the kingdom of heaven*, had formerly laid the foundation of a *christian church*, among the *jews*, and opened the door of faith unto them; — did now, in like manner, to the *uncircumcised gentiles*. And, though all the other APOSTLES were *foundations* of the *christian church*, and had the same lasting powers and commission; though they preached the same doctrine, and confirmed it, by like extra-

Acts x.
45, &c.

VOL. I.

I. i

ordinary

Ver. 45. ¹ See Dr. Lightfoot's works, vol. 1. p. 285.

An. Christi
 Claud. ^{41.} 1.
 Book II.
 Ch. I.
 Sect. V.
 Acts x.
 ult.

ordinary evidences; yet they had none of them the *power of the keys*, in the same sense that St. PETER had. For it was peculiar to him, first to open the door of faith, or to lead the way to the *conversion* both of *jews* and *gentiles*. But, though he began the work; they, as well as he, carried it on, with vigor and succeſſe. After all theſe things had happened, the *new converts* deſired St. PETER to tarry with them, ſome days longer. To which he readily conſented; as willing farther to aſſiſt, inſtruct, and comfort, them.^m

C H A P. I. S E C T. VI.

St. PETER returning to Jeruſalem, the jewiſh converts there chide him, for baptizing uncircumciſed gentiles. He vindicateth himſelf. They acquieſce, at preſent. But this controverſie broke out again, with more violence, afterwards. Acts xi. 1, — 18.

CÆſAREA being the *metropolis* of *Palæſtine*, and *Jeruſalem* ſo very conſiderable a city in that *province*; there was a frequent communication maintained between them. And, therefore, the news of ſo extraordinary an event (as that of the *conversion* of ſome of the *devout gentiles*) ſoon reached the ears of the *chriſtian church* at *Jeruſalem*; where were then *APOSTLES*, as well as *brethren*. The *jews* had, indeed, little or no reaſon to complain of the reception of the *gentiles*, under the *gospel*; and of their being admitted to equal privileges with themſelves; becauſe *their nation* had treated *JESUS*, who was the *meſſiah*, in ſo cruel and ignominious a manner. But, notwithstanding this, they were alarmed at ſuch an attempt. For moſt, or all, of them, who had imbraced *chriſtianity*,

continued

Ver. 48. ^m *Walter Moyle, Eſq*; [vol. 2. of his *works*, p. 200, &c.] ſuppoſes that there were ſeveral idolatrous rites required, at that time, of the *roman* ſoldiers, intirely inconfiſtent with the profeſſion of *chriſtianity*. And that, therefore, *Cornelius* muſt have quitted the army, upon his becoming a *chriſtian*. But he was no idolator, when St. PETER went to preach to him; neither had he been ſo, for ſome time. And the ſcripture is intirely ſilent about his continuing in the army, or leaving it, upon his taking up the profeſſion of *chriſtianity*.

continued, like the *unbelieving jews*, to be excedeing zealous for *the law of Moses*, and very tenacious of *the traditions of the elders*.^{41.} For they had been of the *sect* of the *pharisees*; and we read nothing, hitherto, of the conversion of any *sadducee*. Upon this news, I say, they took the alarm; even before St. PETER himself returned to *Jerusalem*. However; not long after, the APOSTLE returned; and the six *jewish christians*, from *Joppa*, went along with him, to bear their testimony for him, and vindicate what he had done.^a As soon as ever the *jewish christians* at *Jerusalem* saw St. PETER, they (as perfect strangers to his *pontifical supremacie*) began to call in question what he had done, and to expostulate with him, saying: "What do we hear, concerning your last expedition? Have you, indeed, contrary to the custom of *our nation* (founded upon the *decrees* of the wise men, and the *traditions of the elders*) gone among the *uncircumcised gentiles*; and eat, and familiarly conversed, with them? Nay; and, without first requiring of them to become *profelytes of righteousness*; it is reported, that you have even received them, into the *christian church*, by *baptism*; making no difference between them and the *jews*, who are the *antient church and people of GOD*." St. PETER could, with no great propriety, blame his warm accusers; because he himself had, 'till of late, been as bigoted to the *jewish nation*, as any of them. And, accordingly, he did not blame them; nor did he pretend to vindicate what he had done, by insisting upon *his infallibility* and *pontifical authority*. But he vindicated himself; by laying before them the *reason* of his conduct, and appealing to their judgments; *Whether, in such circumstances, he had not acted according to reason and the divine direction?* "I was (said he) in the city of *Joppa*, praying; and, in a trance, (or *extasie*) I saw a *vision*; something like a great sheet, let down from *heaven*, by the four corners, and brought nigh unto me. Upon which, when I had looked intently for some time; and had considered with myself what the meaning of it could be; I saw various sorts of beasts, birds, and insects, tame and wild, clean and unclean, promiscuously mixed together. And, along with the *vision*, I heard a voice, saying, Arise PETER, kill and eat, of any of these creatures, without difference, or distinction. To which I answered: By no means, LORD. For nothing polluted, or unclean, hath ever yet entered into my mouth. The voice from *heaven* replied: What

I i 2

GOD

Ver. 1. ^a St. PETER either suspected, or knew, that the *jewish christians*, at *Jerusalem*, had heard of what he had lately done; and that they were displeased. The reading of *ver. 1.* of this *chapter*, in the *Cambridge manuscript*, intimateth that he knew it. [See Dr. Mill.]

An. Christi

Claud. 1.

Book II.

Ch. I.

Seet. VI.

Acts xi.

1, &c.

An. Christi 41. Claud. 1. Book II. Ch. I. Sect. VI. Acts xi. 9, &c.

GOD (who formerly instituted that *law*, about the distinction of meats) hath now cleansed, under the *gospel*, thou art no longer to reckon polluted, or unclean. And, to confirm the thing, the voice was repeated a third time; and then all the *phænomenon* was taken up again into heaven. Scarce was the *vision* finished, and the sheet, with the various creatures in it, withdrawn; before three men from *Cæsarea*, were inquiring, at the door, for me. Upon which, the *spirit* ordered me to make no scruple of going along with them, any more than if they had been *jews*. Accordingly, I went. And these six of the *christian brethren* (here present) went with me, from *Joppa*; who are witnesses of all that happened, and will confirm what I say. When we came thither, the man told us, that he had seen an *angel*, in his house; who ordered him to send to *Joppa*, and to inquire for one *Simon*, surnamed PETER. He shall teach thee a doctrine, (said the *angel*) whereby thou and thy house shall be saved. After this, I stood up to speak; and had not spoken much, before the *holy spirit* fell down, upon them; as it fell upon us, on the signal day of *pentecost*. That brought to my mind a remarkable saying of the LORD JESUS, which I have heard him repeat, more than once: *John*, indeed, baptized with water; but you shall be baptized, hereafter, with the *holy spirit*, and with fire; or in the appearance of a flame of fire. Seeing the great and wise GOD, the benevolent creator and ruler of all, saw fit to give unto the *uncircumcised gentiles*, like gifts, as he did unto us of the *circumcision*, who first believed on the LORD JESUS CHRIST; if I had refused to baptize them with water, after GOD had baptized them with the *holy spirit*, I had plainly resisted the will of GOD. But alas! what am I, that I should oppose, or contradict, the almighty? When they had heard St. PETER's *apologie*, they were silent; and acquiesced for the present; turning their accusations of the APOSTLE into praise and thanksgiving to almighty GOD, who had granted unto the *devout gentiles*, through JESUS CHRIST his son, space to repent of their sins; with a promise of full pardon, and acceptance unto eternal life, upon their repentance, faith, and future obedience: and who had received them into the *christian church*, equally with the *believing jews*; even without their being first *circumcised*, and brought into subjection to the whole *law* of *Moses*.—But, though these particular persons now acquiesced; yet this was the foundation of the *grand controversy*, in the *apostolic age*. For we shall find, as the *history* proceedeth, that it broke out again, with respect to the *devout gentiles*. [Acts xv.] And was afterwards extended to the converts from among the

the idolatrous gentiles; as appeareth from most of St. PAUL's epistles. And the attentive reader will there find, how very difficult it was to allay the præjudices of the jews, and jewish christians, against the admission of the gentiles; unlesse they would first become *profelytes* of righteousness.

An. Christi
42.
Claud. 2.
Book II.
Ch. II.
Acts xi.
19, &c.

C H A P. II.

Of the conversion of the devout gentiles, in other places, after St. PETER had led the way at Cæsarea: particularly at Antioch in Syria; where the great harvest of them was gathered in, by Barnabas and Saul's laboring a whole year. The disciples, there, were first called CHRISTIANS. Acts xi. 19, — 26.

THE persecution, which arose about the time of St. STEPHEN's martyrdom, had dispersed the christian brethren, into divers countries. And several of them took that opportunity to go about, preaching the gospel, in other places; as Philip had done at Samaria. By which means, christianity spread as far as Phœnicia; the island Cyprus; and Antioch, the metropolis of Syria. Though, hitherto, they preached to none, except jews onely.

But now, St. PETER haveing opened the door of faith, and laid the foundation of a christian church, among the devout gentiles; after GOD had testified, very planely, that it was agreeable to his mind and will; other christians began to imitate St. PETER's example: particularly, some jewish christians, of the island Cyprus, and of the country Cyrene, in Africa, travelling, in their dispersions, to Antioch in Syria, preached the christian doctrine there, to the devout gentiles. And GOD blessed and succeeded their labors. For a great number of them imbraced the christian faith.

In our common copies of the greek testament, we do indeed read, [ver. 19, 20.] "that they, who had formerly preached to none but jews, did now preach [πρὸς τὰς ἑλληνιστὰς] to the hellenists, or græciseing jews." But, in the Alexandrian manuscript, and in the syriac, vulgar, coptic, arabic, and æthiopic versions, they are represented as preaching henceforward [πρὸς τὰς ἑλλήνας] unto the greeks, or uncircumcised.

An. Christi 42.
 Claud. 2.
 Book II.
 Ch. II.
 Acts xi.
 20, &c.

circumcised gentiles. So, likewise, in *Eusebius his ecclesiastical history*, book ii. chapter iii. and in *Chrysostom*, and *Oecumenius*. — This last has been approved, as the true and genuine reading, by the following great and learned men; namely, *Le Clerc*, *Grotius*, *Bengelius*, archbishop *Usher*, *Cocceius*, *Beza*, and *Drusus*. [See *Dr. Mill*, and *Mr. Wetstein*, upon this text.] And, indeed, this last appeareth evidently to have been the true and original reading. For *St. Luke* had spoken of the conversion of *hellenists*, long before. [See *Acts vi. 1.*] But now he is proceeding to a new period. And, after having intimated that the dispersed *christians* had hitherto preached to none but *jews*; he, with great propriety, acquainteth us, that, when *St. Peter* had converted *uncircumcised gentiles*, they followed his example, and preached to *gentiles* also.

The *jews* frequently called *all nations*, excepting their own, *greeks*; from the time of the *Macedonian*, or *Græcian*, monarchy. Just as the *roman empire* was afterwards called *the whole world*; because it extended over the most considerable part of the then known world.

Antioch was the metropolis of *Syria*; for magnitude, situation, and other agreeable circumstances, the third city in the *roman empire*: being excelled by none, except *Rome* and *Alexandria*.^a It was built by *Seleucus*; and called *Antioch*, from the name of his son *Antiochus*. *Grotius* appealeth to *Josephus*, for proof that there was a *jewish university*, in that city; and a great number of *profelytes*.^b But he hath not referred us to the particular passages in *Josephus*, as he ought to have done. Upon examining, I have found the following *paragraph*; to which I suppose *Grotius* referred: “The *jews* are a people
 “dispersed in great numbers, over the face of the whole earth; particularly in *Syria*, which lieth in their neighborhood, and especially
 “in the city of *Antioch*, there are great numbers of them: not only, because it is a large city; but chiefly, because of the privileges and immunities, which were granted them, by the kings that
 “succeeded *Antiochus*. For *Antiochus*, who was called *Epiphanes*,
 “[that is, *the great*, or *illustrious*,] laid waste the city *Jerusalem*,
 “and plundered the temple. But the kings, who came after him, restored all the sacred, brazen vessels, which could be found, to the
 “*jews*, who lived at *Antioch*; that they might put them into their
 “syna-

Ver. 20. ^a *Joseph. de bell. jud. l. 3. c. 2. § ult.*

^b *In prolegom. and Lucam*; where he also appeals to the *roman laws*, in proof of the same thing.

“*synagogue*: allowing them the freedom of the city, equally with
 “the *greeks*. The kings, who succeeded them, did also treat the
 “*jews* in the same manner. Upon which, their numbers increased
 “exceedingly; their temple [or *synagogue*] was made very rich and
 “magnificent; and they were always bringing over a great number
 “of *greeks* to their religious worship; whom they made, in some sort,
 “a part of themselves.”^c I not onely suppose that Grotius had his
 eye upon this passage; but, from Josephus his saying, that “they
 “brought them over to join in their [*synagogue*] worship, and made
 “THEM, IN SOME SORT, A PART OF THEMSELVES;” I think
 it is highly probable, that they were not made *profelytes of righteous-*
ness, but onely *profelytes of the gate*: such as St. LUKE was; and
 such as Grotius is there inquireing after. And St. LUKE’s history, in the
Acts of the APOSTLES, confirms it; that there was a considerable
 number of *profelytes of the gate*, or devout, uncircumcised, gentiles,
 in that great city of *Antioch*. Out of them, there was formed, soon
 after this, a large *christian church*; which was looked upon, as the
mother-church of the *gentile churches*; as the church at *Jerusalem* was
 of the *jewish*, or of all the *christian, churches*. And they were,
 likewise, the *first-fruits* of the devout gentiles, out of *Palæstine*. —
 The report of their conversion quickly reached the ears of the *chris-*
tian church at *Jerusalem*. For there, some, or other, of the
 APOSTLES did hitherto generally reside; to consult how they might
 propagate the *gospel* to the best advantage. Upon this news, they
 (according to their usual vigilance) agreed to send, to *Antioch*, *Joses*,
 the *levite*, whom they had surnamed *Barnabas*; that is, the son of
exhortation, or *consolation*: the very person, who had been so gene-
 rous in contributeing to the charitable fund; [*Acts* iv. 36, 37.] and
 who had brought *Saul* to the *christians* at *Jerusalem*, and convinced
 them that he was a sincere convert. [*Acts* ix. 27, 28.] And, when
Barnabas came to *Antioch*; and saw, with his own eyes, the happy
 effects of the divine goodnesse, in takeing such a number of *uncir-*
cumcised gentiles into the *christian church*; he was not at all envious,
 but (on the contrary) exceedeing glad; and (like the true son of *ex-*
hortation) he exhorted them to persevere with steadfastnesse and reso-
 lution. And, indeed, he was a very proper man to be sent among
 the *gentile converts*. For he was not onely a *Cypriot*, and borne on
gentile ground: but he was a man of great benignity, and sweet-
 nesse

^c De bell. jud. l. 7. c. 3. § 3. — Ἀεὶ τε προσαγόμενοι ταῖς θρησκείαις πολὺ πλῆθος
 Ἑλλήνων, καὶ κείνους τρόπον τινὶ μοῖραν αὐτῶν πεποιήθη.

An. Christi^{42.} nesse of temper. And, therefore, lesse bigoted to his *own nation*,
 Claud. 2. and against the *gentile converts*; and lesse likely to lay any unneccessa-
 Book II. ry burthen upon them. Besides; he was well qualified to instruct
 Ch. II. and establiſh them. For he was one of the *superior prophets*, full
 Acts xi. of the *holy spirit*, and of faith; thoroughly convinced himself of the
 24, &c. truth of *christianity*, and abounding with such *spiritual gifts* and
miraculous powers, as inabled him fully to convince others also. And
 he met with proportionable succeſſe. For he added a conſiderable
 number to the converts, who were there before his coming. Yea;
 the work, at length, grew ſo much upon his hands, that he found
 himſelf, alone, unable to manage it. Hearing, thererefore, that
Saul was at *Tarſus*, his native city; he went thither, in queſt of him.
 And, when *Barnabas* had acquainted him with what had been done,
 in the new work, of converting the *devout gentiles*; and had deſired
 him to go, along with him, to *Antioch*; and aſſiſt him; *Saul* readi-
 ly conſented. And theſe two taught great numbers of the *devout*
gentiles; laboring among them diligently, for a whole year together.—
 In that city, *Barnabas* and *Saul*, who had hitherto been *superior pro-*
phets among the *jews*, became *superior prophets* and *evangelists* to the
devout gentiles. And thus were they trained up, for being APOSTLES
 to the *idolatrous gentiles*, by preaching ſo long to *gentiles*, *profelytes*
 of the gate.

The *jewiſh converts* had hitherto been called, by their enemies,
men of that way, or ſect; *Galilæans*, *Nazarenes*, and other like
 names of reproach. And, among themſelves, they had been called
disciples, *believers*, the *church*, the *saints*; and, to denote the love,
 unity, and concord, which were among them, they ſtyled one an-
 other *brethren*. But now the *gentile converts* at *Antioch* were (poſſi-
 bly, not without a *divine admonition*^d) called by the name of CHRIS-
 TIAN; T I A N S ;

Ver. 26. ^d *Χρηματίζω* ſignifieth, *to be warned by a divine admonition*. [Matt. ii. 12;
 22. Luke ii. 26. Acts x. 22. Heb. viii. 5. and xi. 7. and xii. 25.] *Χρηματίζω* is
 uſed but once more, in the new teſtament; namely, Rom. vii. 3. and, perhaps, there
 it ought to be underſtood in the ſame ſenſe. So *Χρηματισμός* ought evidently to be
 underſtood, Rom. xi. 4. Dr. Mill, upon ver. 25. hath informed us, that the Cam-
 bridge manuſcript readeth this ſentence thus; καὶ τοῖς πρῶτον ἐχρημάτισαν ἐν ἀντιοχείᾳ τοὺς
 μαθητὰς χριστιανούς. Whereby is ſignified, that *Barnabas* and *Saul* firſt gave them the
 name of *christians*. And, indeed, the common reading ſeems to intimate the ſame
 thing, Εὐγένηο δὲ αὐτοὺς, — χρηματίσαι τε πρῶτον ἐν ἀντιοχείᾳ τοὺς μαθητὰς χριστιανούς.
 “And it came, to paſs, that *they* firſt called the diſciples at *Antioch*, by the name of
 “*christians*.” *Barnabas* knew how much the *church*, at *Jeruſalem*, was præjudiced
 againſt them; and how unlikely it was, that they ſhould allow them the name of
brethren.

And,

TIANS; taking their denomination, immediately, from their LORD and master, CHRIST himself. Just as, among the philosophers, the *platonists* had their name from their master *Plato*; the *pythagoreans* from *Pythagoras*; the *epicureans*, from *Epicurus*; and the *aristotelians*, from *Aristotle*. This name, I say, (which hath since spread far and wide, and whose sound hath filled the earth; which hath been so dear to some, and so odious to others) began first at *Antioch*, in *Syria*. For there, the *devout gentiles*, who became the disciples of CHRIST, were first called CHRISTIANS. As they were *uncircumcised gentiles*, it was highly dubious, whether the *jewish converts* would allow them to be called *brethren*; considering how strongly they had been prejudiced against them, and how backward they had been to receive them into the *christian church*. Though, afterwards, the appellation of *brethren* was given them, by the church, at *Jerusalem*, upon a full and mature consideration of their case. [See *Acts* xv. 23.] However; as the *jewish christians* could not presently get over all their former prejudices, and allow those *gentile converts* to be upon a level with themselves; and, as it was, nevertheless, proper that they should have some name, to distinguish them from such *devout gentiles*, as had not imbraced the *christian religion*: — For these, and such like, wise reasons, they were called, and distinguished, by the name of CHRISTIANS. — By what more glorious, or more honorable name, could they have been called? A name, which, in its genuine and original meaning, includeth in it every thing that is virtuous and amiable, just and charitable, noble and divine! And a name, which would still have had the same glorious meaning; had it not been so frequently and so vilely prostituted, by multitudes, who have made great pretensions to it, while their *temper* and *practice* have been very different from their profession: abominable, and provokeing, in the sight of GOD; as well as uncharitable, and highly injurious, to men! Would to GOD, that CHRIST had been the onely master, in whose name, *christians* had ever gloried! And that all, who had ever been called by this sacred and venerable name of CHRISTIANS, had answered the character, by their temper and conduct! Then would they not have been ranked, under so many different *heads*, and *leaders*; to the promoting of strife and contention, instead of truth and piety, virtue and charity: nor would the ene-

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And, if the name of CHRISTIANS was, also, given them by a *divine admonition*, (as the original word doeth, in the new testament, commonly signifie) it shows the divine concern for them; and the honor, which *heaven* put upon them, in dignifying and distinguishing them, by that high and honorable name, or title.

An. Christi
42.
Claud. 2.
Book II.
Ch. II.
Acts xi.
26.

An. Christi 43. Claud. 3. *mies of our holy religion have had any, the least, occasion, to glory and triumph over us.*

Book II. Ch. III. Acts xi. 27. &c. *In this large city of Antioch, in Syria, was the great harvest of devout gentiles; begun by men of Cyprus and Cyrene; but chiefly gathered in, by Barnabas and Saul. Though, very probably, Saul had never preached to uncircumcised gentiles, 'till he went, along with Barnabas, from Tarsus, to Antioch.*

C H A P. III.

Agabus prophefieth of a famine, in the land of Judæa. Upon that, the gentile christians, at Antioch, make a collection for the jewish christians, at Jerusalem: Which they sent, to the elders there, by the hands of Barnabas and Saul. Acts xi. 27, to the end of the chapter.

TH E R E were not onely APOSTLES, in the *christian church*, but *prophets* also; who were of a rank and order, inferior to APOSTLES. And, to them, GOD saw fit to revele some events, of lesser importance, which he had not reveled even to the APOSTLES themselves. About this time, some of those *prophets* came, from *Jerusalem*, to *Antioch*, to visit and establiſh the *christians* there. Among the rest, there was one, *Agabus*, by name. And, while the *christians* were gathered round about him, (among whom St. LUKE seemeth to have been present; from a reading, which is quoted in the margin^a: — While the *christians* stood round about *Agabus*, I say,) he rose up; and, by a *prophetic impulse*, foretold the approach of a great

Ver. 28. ^a Instead of [ἀνὰ δὲ εἰς ἐξ αὐτῶν, &c. and one of them riseing up, &c.] the Cambridge manuscript readeth ἦν δὲ πολλὴ ἀγαλλίασις. Συνεστραμμένων δὲ ἡμῶν, ἔφη, &c. And there was great joy. And, when we returned, he said, &c.] So, also, St. Austin. [See Weistein in loc.] According to that reading, St. LUKE, the *historian*, reckoned himself as one of the *christians*, then present. This agreeth very well with the account, which hath frequently been given of him; namely, that he was a native of *Antioch* in *Syria*. And, as he is evidently distinguished from them of the *circumcision*, Col. iv. 11. compared with ver. 14. he was, most probably, a *devout gentile*.

great famine; which should affect, not onely the city of *Jerusalem*, but even the whole land of *Judæa*; ^b the country, from which those prophets came. That famine did, accordingly, come to passe, about the latter end of the fourth, or the begining of the fifth, year of *Claudius Cæsar*, the roman emperor; and is taken notice of, by *Josephus* ^c, *Eusebius* ^d, and *Orosius* ^e.

An. Christi
43.
Claud. 3.
Book II.
Ch. III.
Acts xi.
28, &c.

It had been a custom for the *jews* and *profelytes*, in their severall dis-
persions, to send presents to *Judæa*; and especially to *Jerusalem*.
And the *jews* in *Judæa* seem to have expected it, as, in some sort,
their due. Particularly, we find that *Helene*, queen of the *Adiabe-
nes*, and her son *Izates*, who had lately become *profelytes* to the *jew-
ish religion*, were very generous to the poor, at *Jerusalem*, in this
insueing famine. ^f For the queen went to see the celebrated tem-
ple, and to offer sacrifices there. And, finding *Jerusalem* oppressed
by the famine, and many perishing through want, she sent abroad
her officers; some of them to *Alexandria*, to buy corne; others to
Cyprus, to purchase dried figs; who returned quickly, and distribut-
ed food to the necessitous. By which means, she laid a lasting ob-
ligation upon the whole nation of the *jews*. And her son *Izates*
also, haveing heard of the famine, sent a large sum of money, to the
chief men, at *Jerusalem*. — In conformity to such a laudable cus-

K k 2

tom,

^b *Agabus* prophesied that the famine should spread, ἐφ' ὅλην τὴν οἰκουμένην, which, in
our english translation, is rendered, [throughout the whole world.] But, by that, was
meant no more than the land of *Judæa*. Ἡ γῆ commonly signifieth the earth. But
it must be understood, onely of the land of *Israel*; Josh. ii. 3. Luke. iv, 25. In
like manner, οἰκουμένη, which originally signifieth the habitable, or rather the inhabit-
ed, world, must signifie onely one country; in the LXX version, Isa. xiii. 5. and in
the new testament. Luke xxi. 26. compared with ver. 21; 23. Besides; had the
famine been to reach through the whole world; those disciples at *Antioch* would, very
probably, have sent relief to other countries; if they had been able. Or rather, per-
haps, they would have sent to none at all; as fearing they should want themselves.
But, it is plane, they understood the famine would happen in *Judæa*. For there is
not the least hint of their thinking of sending relief to any other place. Nor were
they afraid of suffering, by it, themselves. No! they sent relief to the place, where
it was to happen; every man as he abounded, καθὼς ἠύπορε ὁ τις, &c. Whereby it is
intimated, that they themselves had plenty. [See Dr. Lardner's credibility of the gos-
pel history, part i. p. 318, &c. of the 2d edition; p. 542, &c. of the 3d edition;
and Drusus, in critic. sacr. vol. 8. p. 1237.]

^c Antiq. l. 20. c. 2. § ult.
l. 2. c. 12.

^d Chronicon, p. 79; 204. & Hist. Eccles.

^e Lib. 7. c. 6. But he greatly mistaketh, in supposing that this *Helene* was a
christian.

^f Vid. Vales. ad Euseb. l. 2. c. 12. Hudson, in Jos. Antiq. l. 20. c. 2. § ult.
and Dr. Lardner's Credibility, &c. part i. p. 322, &c. of the 2d edition; p. 548,
&c. of the 3d edition.

An. Christi 43.
 Claud. 3.
 Book II.
 Ch. III.
 Acts xi.
 29, 30.

tom, the *gentile christians* at *Antioch*, upon *Agabus* his prædiction of a famine in *Judæa*, determined to give, every man, (*in proportion to his own ability and plenty*) towards a charitable collection, for the relief of the *jewish converts*, in *Judæa*, and especially in *Jerusalem*, from whence the sound of the *gospel* first came out.^g For, “as they were made partakers of their *spiritual things*, they thought it their duty to minister unto them in *temporal things*.” So remarkably doeth the wise and over-ruling providence of GOD adapt the common course of things, so as to subserve his own great and beneficent designs: as planely appeareth, in the instance now before us. For the reception of *uncircumcised gentiles*, into the *christian church*, had a little soured the minds of the *jewish converts*. But, upon this approach of a famine, here was an early occasion given, for cementing and uniteing the *jewish* and *gentile converts*, into *one church*, and body, under JESUS CHRIST, their common head and LORD. For kindnesse and charity do, of all things, sweeten men’s minds; and beget a favorable opinion of the persons, who are so bounteous and liberal. The helping them in their distresse, therefore, was the most effectual way to win over the *jewish converts*. And the knowing of the *famine* before-hand, so as to give them an opportunity to provide for it, when the *church* was in it’s tender, infant state, and many had forsaken all, to preach the *gospel*, doeth planely testifie the excellence and usefulness of the *gifts of the spirit*; and, particularly, that of *prophecie*. And, indeed, such extraordinary difficulties and discouragements could hardly have been prevented, or sustained, without extraordinary helps and directions.— When they had made that most charitable collection, they sent it to the *elders*, at *Jerusalem*, by the hands of *Barnabas* and *Saul*. The *elders*, or *early converts*, in the *primitive church*, were of three sorts. — (1.) Ἀϋόπται, The *eye-witnesses*, or those who had seen OUR LORD in the flesh; and were among the *first disciples*, or *most early converts*. (2.) Ἀπώγται, The *first converts* in any particular place; who were always honored for their *early conversion*, and ready reception of the *gospel*; and were the *primary elders of particular churches*. (3.) The [διαδόχοι,] *successors of the* [ἀπώγται] *elders of the second sort*.^h — Those *elders*, to whom *Barnabas* and *Saul* carried that charitable collection, were (I suppose) of the first sort. And

Ver. 29. ^g Rom. xv. 25, &c.

Ver. 30. ^h For a more particular account of the *elders*, in the *primitive church*; see the *essay annexed to 2 Tim. part. i. chap. 3. § 2, &c.*

And such of them, as were not APOSTLES, were honored as next in dignity and eminence to the APOSTLES.

Upon the persecution, which followed the martyrdom of St. Stephen, most of the christians had fled from Jerusalem, except the APOSTLES. When that persecution ceased (as it did, some time before this) many of them returned again to Jerusalem. Among whom, were (very probably) the elders here mentioned. When they returned, the APOSTLES could the better leave that city, and visit the other churches ; as having left the mother-church, at Jerusalem, in safe hands. And the absence of all the APOSTLES appeareth to have been known to the christians at Antioch, from their sending their generous contribution to the ELDERS at Jerusalem.

Barnabas and Saul's delivering that money safe, into the hands of these ELDERS, was *their ministry*ⁱ ; which they are said to have fulfilled, at Jerusalem, at this time.

^{43.}
An. Christi
Claud. 3.

Book II.
Ch. IV.
Sect. I.

Acts xi.
ult.

C H A P. IV.

Concerning the gospel of St. Matthew.

S E C T. I.

Some have thought that St. MATTHEW'S GOSPEL was written during this period. Who St. MATTHEW was. He is said to have wrote his gospel in hebrew, for the use of the converted jews ; when they were going to preach the gospel to the gentiles : And (very likely) he published it, afterwards, in greek, for the use of the CHRISTIANS in other countries.

DURING this period some have thought that St. MATTHEW wrote the *gospel*, which to this day goeth under his name. I will, therefore, take this occasion to say some things concerning it.

St. MATTHEW was the son of *Alphæus*, or *Cleophas* : but not of that *Alphæus*, who was father of *James*, *Joses*, *Simon*, and *Judas*, the brethren, or kinsmen of OUR LORD. For St. MATTHEW is never

ⁱ Διακονία, Acts xi. 29. compared with chap. xii. 25.

An. Christi never once represented as *the brother*, or *kinsman*, of OUR LORD.^a
 43.
 Claud. 3. He was also named *Levi*. And, before OUR LORD called him to be
 Book II. *his disciple*, he was a *publicane*, or collector of the *roman* tribute, by
 Ch. IV. the sea-side; or at the custom-house, in *Capernaum*.^b After he had
 Sect. I. attended, for some time, upon OUR LORD, as *his disciple*; he was,
 Acts xi. together with the other eleven, chosen to be an APOSTLE of *the cir-*
 ult. *cumcision*. From which time, he conversed familiarly with OUR
 LORD; and was an eye and ear-witnesse of his discourses, actions, and
 sufferings. And was not onely convinced of his crucifixion and
 death; but fully satisfied, also, of the truth and reality of his resur-
 rection from the dead. Upon the day of *pentecost*, he received a
 most plentiful effusion of the *spirit*: by which he was illuminated
 with the *scheme of the christian doctrine*, which was to be founded
 upon *facts*; and could preach it in divers languages, as well as work
miracles in confirmation of it. Before the conversion of *Cornelius*,
 he had preached to none but to the *jews* onely. Most probably, he
 had, since that, preached, for some time, to the *devout gentiles*, with-
 in the borders of *Palæstine*. But now, being determined to travel
 into other countries, he is reckoned, by some, to have written *his gos-*
pel, at *Jerusalem*,^c or in some part of *Judæa*; the first of the four
evangelists^d; and left it with the *hebrews*, to supply the want of his
 presence among them. *Eusebius* sais, "That MATTHEW, haveing
 " first preached to the *hebrews*, and being about to go to other nations,
 " committed to writeing the *gospel* according to him, in his own
 " country-language; supplying, by that writeing, the want of his
 " presence and conversation, among those, from whom he was now
 " to depart."^e From hence, Dr. *Mill* concluded, that *Eusebius* was
 of

^a See the history before St. *James*, p. 7, 8.

^b Matt. ix. 9. and x. 3. compared with Mark ii. 14. and Luke v. 27, 28. As to the wisdom of St. MATTHEW's conduct, in suddenly forsakeing all, and following CHRIST, when CHRIST called him; see the reasonableness of the christian religion, p. 202, — 207.

^c *Athanas.* de lib. S. Script. *Chrysostome* affirms, that MATTHEW first wrote his *gospel* at *Jerusalem*. [Vid. *Vales.* in *Euseb. Eccles. Hist.* l. 3. c. 24.] And several manuscripts, mentioned by Dr. *Mill*, [in his note at the end of St. MATTHEW's *gospel*,] affirm the same thing; or that it was written in some part of *Palæstine*.

^d *Origen.* Comment. in *Matt.* apud. *Euseb. Eccles. Hist.* l. 6. c. 25. *Jerome* de scriptor. eccles. in *Matth.*

^e *Euseb. Eccles. Hist.* l. 3. c. 24. *Baronius*, [in his annals,] and Mr. *Jones*, [in his canon of the n. t. vol. 3. p. 60.] have both asserted, "that *Eusebius*, in his *Chronicle*,
 " dateth the writeing of St. MATTHEW's *gospel* in the third year of *Caligula*,
 " that is, in the forty-first year of CHRIST, or eight years after his ascension."
 But, upon a careful inquiry, I cannot find that they had any just grounds for that as-
 sertion.

of opinion, that this *gospel* was written in the year of OUR LORD 41. or the eighth year after OUR LORD's ascension.^f Several of the antient MSS. (as well as the *arabic* version) agree with this account.^g According to this calculation, the *gospel of St. Matthew* must have been written, either in the last year of *Caligula*, or the first of *Claudius*; which cometh to much the same thing. For *Caligula* reigned onely three years, and some odd months; and *Claudius* immediately succeeded him. The calculations, therefore, will differ onely a small matter; as they may both fall within the compasse of the same year, or thereabouts. Nay; as the last year of *Caligula* was imperfect; they might (possibly) reckon it to *Claudius*, and call it the first year of his reign. By which mean, the accounts will almost coincide. These testimonies are so expresse, that, as several learned men have thought, they deserve great regard; especially as the state of things, about this time, conspires to render the account highly probable. For, when the APOSTLES had planted *christianity*, among the *jews*, in *Judæa*; and, by their *preaching* and *miracles*, had raised so much discourse, about CHRIST's life and actions; they would scarce leave their numerous converts to uncertain reports, and without any authentic account of JESUS his ministry. Accounts would, undoubtedly, be inquired after. Things far lesse remarkable are reported, and heard, with eagerneffe and an insatiable curiosity. And, if we consider that great zeale and diligence to propagate *christianity*, which the APOSTLES manifested, in several other instances; together with those treasures of *wisdom* and *knowledge*, which were communicated unto them, by the *illumination* of the SPIRIT; it will hardly suffer us to suppose, that they would leave the *jewish christians*, without a just and credible account of such memorable things, written, or approved, by such as had been eye-witnesses to the *facts*: especially, as *false accounts* would be very likely to spread; and the discourses of OUR SAVIOR were yet fresh in the memory of the APOSTLES.^h— And, finally, as the great harvest of the *jews*, in *Judæa*, was gathered in; and GOD had opened the door of faith to the *devout gentiles*, in *Judæa*; and was going to send the APOSTLES

An. Christi

43. Claud. 3.

Book II. Ch. IV.

Sect. I.

Acts xi. ult.

^f Prolegom. 61. ^g Vid. *Milium* ad calcem *Matt.* *Jones* his *Canon*, &c. vol. 3, p. 63. *Beza*. in *Matt.* xxviii. ult. and *Grot.* in *Matt.* c. i. init. *Wetstein*. ibid. *F. Simon's* critical history of the n. t. chap. 10. p. 84.
^h Clerici histor. eccles. p. 414. *Jones* his canon, &c. vol. 3. p. 61.

An. Christi to the devout gentiles, as well as to the jews, dispersed among the nations.ⁱ

43.
Claud. 3.

Book II.

Ch. IV.

Sect. I.

Acts xi.

ult.

If the APOSTLES of the circumcision left one authentic account, among the converted jews, in Judæa, when they began to gather in the gentiles; this might be thought a sufficient reason why they did not, for some time, write any more gospels. But the APOSTLES, and other preachers, took care to spread the gospels, after they were committed to writing. And they are particularly said to have carried the gospel of St. MATTHEW into the eastern dispersions; where the jews, in general, retained the syro-chaldaic, or hebrew, language.^k

Irenæus, who was a more early father, than Eusebius, placeth the writing of St. MATTHEW's gospel, after the year of OUR LORD 60. And the antients, in general, affirm that it was written in hebrew.^l Whereas; our present copy of this gospel doeth not appear to be a translation; any more than the gospels, written by St. MARK, or St. JOHN. "Now, it seemeth unreasonable, on the one hand,

to

ⁱ Against St. MATTHEW's writing his gospel so early, it may be objected, "that it contains many and plane intimations, of GOD's rejecting the unbelieving jews, and taking in the gentiles to be his people. [See Matt. xii. 21. and xx. 1, — 16. and xxi. 33, — 46. and xxii. 1, — 14. and xxiv. 14; 31.] and, that the jewish distinction of meats was done away, under the gospel. [Matt. xv. 10, &c.] Now, from St. MATTHEW's speaking of such things, with so much plainness; some may imagine, that, before he wrote, he understood the gospel, which St. PAUL preached, as clearly and fully, as the other three evangelists. And, therefore, could not write so early as the year 41."

Answer. Why might not St. MATTHEW record OUR SAVIOR's parables and discourses, concerning such things, in the year 41; as well as after the year 60? For (though he speaks of the reception of the gentiles) he no where intimates on what terms the gentiles were to be received; that is, whether, as proselytes of the gate, proselytes of righteousness, or as no proselytes to the jewish religion at all. And, if we consider, that the devout gentiles had been converted, in great numbers, before St. MATTHEW wrote his gospel; and that, in preparing St. PETER's mind for the reception of them, GOD had favored him with the vision of the sheet, in which he was ordered to eat of things, which the law of Moses had prohibited as unclean; — we need no longer to wonder at any of the expressions, made use of, in St. MATTHEW's gospel; supposing it was written in the year 41.

^k Euseb. Eccles. Hist. l. 5. c. 10.

^l Papias apud Euseb. hist. eccles. l. 3. c. 39. Iren. l. 3. c. 1. & Euseb. H. E. l. 5. c. 8; 10. Some of the antients supposed that it was translated into greek, by James, the brother of OUR LORD; or by St. John. [See Dr. Mill, upon the conclusion of St. MATTHEW's gospel. And Dr. Whitby's præfatory discourse to the four evangelists, p. 45, 46.] But Origen (who had opportunity to know the matter fully) seems not to have been satisfied with the tradition, that St. MATTHEW wrote in hebrew. [See Dr. Lardner's credibility of the gospel-history, part ii. vol. 3. p. 403, &c. and Wettstein on the begining of the gospel according to St. MATTHEW.]

“ to call in question a fact, attested, and confirmed, by the testi-
 monies of such a number of credible persons, who lived nearest
 the time, when the *gospels* were writen. And yet it is evident,
 on the other hand, that the *greek copy* of St. MATTHEW is *very*
antient; and that it was looked upon, and quoted, as *authentic*,
 by the *christians* in the early ages.” It might, possibly, clear up
 this difficulty, and reconcile these seemingly different accounts; if
 we were to suppose, that St. MATTHEW wrote and published his
gospel in *Judæa*, about eight or nine years after OUR LORD's ascension;
 [or about the year 41.] for the use of the *hebrew christians*, especial-
 ly in *Judæa*: and, that he published it, again, in other countries,
 after the year 60; for the benefit of other *churches* and *christians*.^m And
 then, it was as proper for him to publish it, first in *syro-chaldaic*, which,
 in the new testament, is commonly called the *hebrew tongue*; as it was
 afterwards to publish it in the *greek language*. For the *hebrew jews*
 did not commonly understand *greek*; though it was so generally un-
 derstood, among the *gentiles*, and by the *jews* of the western disper-
 sions. As St. MATTHEW had received the *gift of tongues*, he was
 sufficiently qualified to write in both languages.

I own, we have no testimonies for St. MATTHEW's publishing
 it twice; unlesse the testimonie of *Irenæus*, and what is gathered from
Eusebius, and the antient mss. be, in general, credited; and the
 frequent assertions of the *antients*, that it was writen in *hebrew*, be
 compared with the quotations, or allusions, of even the *apostolical*
fathers; which seem to have been taken from the *greek*; by their
 agreement in the words, as well as in the sense. Nor has our pre-
 sent *greek copy*, of St. MATTHEW's *gospel*, any marks of it's being a
translation. — As this *solution* will take in, and reconcile, all these
 particulars, it seemeth to deserve great regard. Without all dispute,
 the *greek copy* of St. MATTHEW is *very antient*; and was common-
 ly looked upon, as *authentic* and *canonical*, by the *christians*, in the
 early ages. And, as the generality of *christians* understood *greek*;
 and so few, comparatively, understood the *hebrew*; it is no won-
 der, that, after the destruction of *Jerusalem* and the *jewish nation*,
 the *hebrew copy* should grow into disuse, and by degrees vanish;
 though the *greek copy* continued, and was most carefully pre-
 served.

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^m See *Sixtus Senensis bibliothec. sanct. l. 7. p. 582.* Mr. Jones his *Canon*,
 &c. vol. 3. p. 64. Dr. *Whitby's præfatory discourse to the four gospels*, p. 43; 48.

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An. Christi

43.
Claud. 3.

Book II.

Ch. IV.

Sect. II.

Acts xi.

ult.

That St. MATTHEW's gospel is *authentic scripture*, and ought to be received, as part of the *canon* of the new testament; hath been shown abundantly, by such invincible proofs, as the following: *namely*, That it is mentioned in all the *antient catalogues* of the books of the new testament: that it was read, as *sacred scripture*, in the *primitive churches*; imbraced, and quoted, as *scripture*, by the *fathers*; and found in the *antient manuscripts* and *translations* of the new testament. But, for a larger account of these particular proofs, I refer the reader to the learned and elaborate performances, quoted in the margin. ⁿ

C H A P. IV. S E C T. II.

The begining of St. MATTHEW's gospel authentic.
The genealogy reconciled with that given by St. LUKE.
The method, which St. MATTHEW observed, in writing his gospel.

I BELIEVE it will not be expected of me to abridge this *gospel*; (as I intend to do with the *epistles*, when I come to the times, in which they were written) because there is already præfixed a short account of what is contained in all the *four gospels*, as an *introduction to this history*. But it may not be amiss to make a few general observations, in order to clear up some difficulties, concerning the begining of this *gospel*, and the method in which it was written. "It hath been doubted, whether the begining of this *gospel* is *authentic*." Some of the *antient Ebionites* ^a (who were a *sect* that arose, among the *jewish christians*, in the *primitive church*) left out the *first* and *second chapters* of St. MATTHEW, as inconsistent with their parti-

^a Dr. *Whitby's* præfatory discourse to the *four gospels*. Mr. *Jones* his *Canon*, &c. Mr. *Richardson's* *Canon* of the n. t. vindicated. But, above all, Dr. *Lardner's* *Credibility of the gospel history*, part 2d.

^a *Euseb. Eccles. hist.* l. 3. c. 27. *Epiphan. Hæres.* 30. n. 13. The *second chapter* was owned by *Hegeippus*, an *hebrew christian*, in the second century. [See Dr. *Lardner's* *Credibility*, &c. part ii. vol. i. p. 318.] And *Clemens Alexandrinus* asserteth the genuineness of the *genealogies*, in the *first chapter* of St. *Matthew*, and the *third* of St. *Luke*. [See Dr. *Lardner*, as above; vol. 2. p. 487. alias 489.]

particular sentiments. For, they looked upon JESUS as a mere man: though some of them thought that he was produced by the *holy spirit*; but others of them held that he was the son both of *Joseph* and *Mary*. And, besides rejecting the beginning of St. *Matthew*; they, in other places, made additions to *this gospel*, to favor their own peculiar tenets. But the *moderns*, who have been for rejecting the *introduction* to St. MATTHEW's *gospel*, have been induced thereto, very much, upon the account of the difficulties, which they apprehend, concerning OUR LORD's *genealogy*; and, especially, because it differeth so much from that given us by St. LUKE.^b But these difficulties do not appear to me, to be either so many, or so great, as to justify such an alteration. For, as to the difficulties of the *genealogy* in St. MATTHEW, considered by itself: (1.) Though it was a rare, and unusual thing, for the *jews* to mention *women*, in their *genealogies*; yet the *women*, here mentioned, were very properly taken notice of, as not being near a-kin to the persons who married them. And, therefore, they were exceptions to the general rule, observed by the *heirs* of the promised blessing. (2.) *Jechonias*, ver. 11. and *Jechonias*, ver. 12. must be different persons. For so they are distinguished, in the old testament; being called *Jeboiachim*, and *Jeboiachin*; who were father and son. And, hereby, the three fourteens will be complete; as St. MATTHEW plainly designed they should be. Whereas; if they are not distinct persons, one of the three periods will contain no more than thirteen generations. (3.) It appeareth, from the old testament, that St. MATTHEW hath left out some persons, in the *genealogy*; and yet proceeded, as if he had enumerated all; *that is*, he hath left out three persons; [namely, *Azariah*, *Joash*, and *Amaziah*,] between *Joram* and *Ozias*^c, ver. 8. But, as to this difficulty, it is easie to answer: that, as *son*, in the *jewish language*, doeth often signify a *distant descendent*; so they are sometimes said to *beget* their distant posterity^d

And, in many of the *genealogies*, recorded in the old testament, we find such omissions designedly made. Thus *Cain*, and his descendants, are left out; 1 *Chron.* i. because they were a wicked race.

L 1 2

Simeon

^b As to the difficulty, which arises, from St. MATTHEW's saying that JESUS was borne in the days of *Herod*; that is, *the great*; and St. LUKE's mentioning a *census*, or inrollment, made, by order of *Augustus Cæsar*, in *Judæa*, about the time that JESUS was borne, see Dr. *Lardner's credibility*, &c. part i. book 2. chap. 1. the end of the *præface*, and the *appendix*.

^c 2 *Chron.* xxvi. 1; 4. and xxiv. 27. and xxii. 11. and ver. 1.

^d See *Isa.* xxxix. 7.

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An. Christi ^{43.} Simeon is left out, by Moses, Deut. xxxiii. 3, &c. because of his
 Claud. 3. great cruelty at Sichem. Six are omitted, in the *genealogy*, given us
 by Ezra. [Ezra vii. 1, — 5. compared with 1 Chron. vi. 3, — 14.]
 Book II. So Rev. vii. when the LORD's people were sealed, the tribe of Dan
 Ch. IV. was left out: which is thought to have been, because *idolatry* be-
 Sect. II. gan in that tribe.^e And many other like instances may be produc-
 Acts xi. ult. ed. — As St. MATTHEW, therefore, was a *jew*, and wrote his
gospel, originally, for the use of the *jewish converts*; he could not
 be blamed, for following a well known custom: especially, when
 it is added, that he kept in the right line; though he omitted par-
 ticular persons. And, therefore, he sufficiently showed that *Joseph*,
 the supposed father of JESUS, whose *genealogy* he there giveth us,
 was of the house and lineage of *David*. Some have thought, that
 these three persons are omitted, as being the descendents of *Joram*,
 [or *Jehoram*;] who was himself an idolator, and who had married
 the daughter of idolatrous *Abab*.^f And that, as they copied after
 his wickedness, GOD showed his detestation of them, unto the
 third and fourth generation; according to the threatening expressed
 in the *second commandment*. But, whether that was St. MATTHEW's
 reason for omitting them; or whether he copied from a *genealogy*,
 taken from the public records, in which there were the same omis-
 sions; or omitted them, to reduce the number to three fourteens: —
 Which-ever, I say, of these ways it happened; it is not very ma-
 terial. It is evident, that the *jews* then had public tables of the *ge-
 nealogies* of their tribes and families. For *Josephus* hath given us
 his own *genealogy*, as taken from such public records.^g And, when
Augustus Cæsar made the general inrollment in *Judea*, it plainly
 appeared that *Joseph* and *Mary* were of the house and family of
David.^h

The first of the *periods*, in the *genealogy*, given by St. MAT-
 THEW, consisted of just fourteen persons; and, possibly, the last
 had just fourteen persons also. He, therefore, might leave out a few
 names, in the second period, as thinking that his account would be
 more uniform; and that it would be of advantage to his reader's
 memory, that all the three *periods* should be reduced to an equal
 number of *generations*. — But, which way soever it be accounted
 for, St. MATTHEW was not guilty of any deviation from the *jew-
 ish*

^e Judg. xviii. throughout the chapter.

^f 2 Kings viii. 16; 18.

^g Josephus in vit. § 1. See also Luke ii. 36. Acts iv. 36. Rom. xi. 1.
 Phil. iii. 5.

^h Luke ii. 1, — 5. compared with the next note.

ish custom. And, therefore, the *jews* of that age could have nothing to object against his method. And other persons may be abundantly assured, both from St. MATTHEW's expresse assertion, *ver. 1.* and many other hints, dispersed up and down the new testament, that OUR LORD sprang from the family of *David*.ⁱ

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(2.) "As to the reconciling the *genealogy* in St. MATTHEW, with that given us by St. LUKE." *Julius Africanus* hath long since attempted this, by asserting that St. MATTHEW hath given us CHRIST's *genealogy*, according to his *natural* descent: but St. LUKE hath followed the *legal* account; by which a man was obliged to marry the widow of his brother, or near relation; and raise up seed to his deceased brother, or kinsman. For such were, by the *law*, accounted the children of the deceased; though the natural descendents of his brother, or near relation. *This solution* he pretendeth to have received, as a tradition from the kinsmen of OUR LORD. — There seems to me to be something very confused in that chapter of *Eusebius* his *ecclesiastical history*, in which this story is related. And *Valesius* has taken notice of more mistakes than one, in that very chapter. Nay; *Africanus* himself, who proposes this solution, does, afterwards, speak dubiously of it; and recommends it, not from any sufficient *testimony* that he had met with, but as in itself the plainest and best *solution*.^k

I acknowledge this might, possibly, be the case. But it doeth not appear to me to carry so much clearness, and evidence, along with it, as the following *solution*; namely, that St. MATTHEW hath given us the *genealogy* of *Joseph*, and St. LUKE that of the virgin *Mary*. As to the first of these; it will be generally allowed. And, therefore, it is the second, which we are principally concerned to defend. And which we shall attempt to do, by the following observations. (1.) I apprehend that the *virgin Mary* is, in the *jewish Talmud*, called the daughter of *Heli*.^l For several things are there said of *Mary*, the daughter of *Heli*; which plainly show, whom the *jews* designed, and how great malice and rancor they continued to entertain against the mother of JESUS. (2.) As St. MATTHEW wrote his *gospel*, originally, for the sake of the *converted jews*; it was

ⁱ Acts ii. 30. and xiii. 22, 23. Rom. i. 3. 2 Tim. ii. 8. Rev. v. 5. and xxii. 16.

^h *Euseb. eccles. hist.* l. i. c. 7. and *Dr. Lardner's credibility*, part ii. vol. 3. p. 167, &c.

^l *Hieros. Chagigah, fol. 77. 4.* *Dr. Lightfoot's works*, vol. ii. p. 399, 400.

An. Christi was very proper for him to give the *genealogy* by the *father's* side. For it was a *maxim*, with the *jews*, that *the family of the mother is not called a family.*^m But St. LUKE, (though he so far complied with the *jewish* custom, as to omit the name of *Mary*; and proceed from *Joseph*, the supposed father of JESUS, to *Heli*, whose son, or descendent, OUR LORD really was; — yet) as he was giving the *genealogy* of an extraordinary person, who had no earthly father; — as he was a *gentile* himself, — and wrote primarily, and more especially, for the use of the *gentiles*ⁿ; — he varied from the common *jewish* custom, and gave the *genealogy* by the *mother's* side^o; and from CHRIST's real, or *natural*, progenitors. And the following observations appear, to me, very much to confirm this. For, it is said, (3.) That, if the *jews* were discoursing, principally, about the *ancestors* of any person; they used to begin with them, and to descend to the person himself: but, if the *person*, whose *genealogy* they recited, was the *principal subject* of their discourse; they began with him, and went back to his progenitors.^p Accordingly; St. MATTHEW, who wrote for the use of the *jews*, more immediately, began with *Abraham* and *David*, two of the *principal persons* among the *ancestors* of the MESSIAH; to whom, particularly, GOD had promised that, from them, the MESSIAH should descend; and for whom the whole *jewish nation* had the highest reverence. It must, therefore, have tended very much to remove the *præjudices* of the *jews*, and take away their contempt of JESUS of *Nazareth*, to be informed, that he sprang from the *greatest men*, and *most renowned kings*; the most holy and eminent *patriarchs*, and the most distinguished of *their pious ancestors*: from whom, the *prophets*, in general, had prophesied that CHRIST was to descend. In the account of the *jews*, it added dignity and lustre to JESUS, that he was descended from *Abraham* and *David*. Whereas; St. LUKE, being a *gentile*, and writing for the use of the *gentile christians*, began with JESUS himself; who was (in their account) the *principal person* in the whole series. And he carrieth up his *genealogy* (not onely to *David* and *Abraham*, the great *ancestors* of the *jews*; but) to *Adam*, the great and common father of all *mankind*. (4.) The place and order, in which the two *evangelists* have recited the *genealogies*, is another

^m Lightfoot's *Harmony of the new testament*, p. 3.

ⁿ Origen. *apud*. Euseb. H. E. l. 6. c. 25.

^o The *Lycians* reckoned their *genealogy* from their *mother's* family. But that was peculiar to them. [*Herodot. edit. Gale*, p. 72.]

^p See Lev. xxvi. 42. Ezra vii. 1, &c. Isa. i. 1. Jerem. i. 1. Ezek. i. 3. Jos. Antiq. l. 12. c. 6. § 1.

another argument, which appeareth to me of very considerable moment. St. MATTHEW, giving the *jews* a *genealogy* of CHRIST, by the *father's* side, according to the usual custom of their nation, very judiciously and properly placeth it before the account of his conception and birth. Whereas; St. LUKE doeth not place his *genealogy* before CHRIST's birth; but defers it, 'till he comes to the thirtieth year of his age. And then, not onely carrieth it up to the *first*, and common, parents of all mankind; but considereth *him* as borne of the *virgin Mary*; or, as the *seed of the woman*, who was to break the *serpent's* head. And, accordingly, he hath placed the *genealogy*, immediately before OUR LORD's vanquishing *Satan*, the *old serpent*, who attacked him, with a three-fold temptation, in the solitary wilderness. From whence, OUR LORD returned into *Galilee*; and immediately began his *ministerial*, or *prophetic*, work. This order and connection points out St. LUKE's design; as would appear to greater advantage, if we had not mangled the new testament, and obscured the *connection*, by an injudicious divideing it into *chapters* and *verses*.

As to the *genealogies*, I have nothing farther to add; save onely, that I look upon *Cainan*, mentioned *Luke* iii. 36. to be an interpolation; and that it was not in the genuine, original, copy of St. LUKE.

All the *four evangelists* wrote the life of OUR LORD, as he was the great *prophet and savior of the world*. And, therefore, they have, with great justnesse, passed over the private and retired part of his life; and hastened to the public and *prophetic* part of it; which commenced, when he was thirty years of age: — the time, at which the *jewish high-priest* used to enter upon his office. For OUR LORD, upon his incarnation, had emptied himself; and did not receive the *holy spirit*, to qualifie him for preaching, and working *miracles*, 'till after he was *baptized*, by *John*, his great harbinger, or fore-runner.

The method, in which St. MATTHEW proposed to write his *gospel*, seemeth to have been, not so much to follow the order of time, as the other *evangelists* have done; but (after the *introduction*) first to give a summary account of the *doctrine*, which CHRIST preached; and then, of the *miraculous evidence*, which attended it; together with some of the most material of his occasional *discourses* with the *pharisees*, *sadducees*, and his own *disciples*. It is also apparent, that he (as well as St. MARK and St. LUKE) designed to give a more particular account of the *most public parts* of OUR LORD's *ministry*.

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An. Christi *try.* And, therefore, he hath passed over the *private part* of it, which was between OUR LORD's being *baptized*, and the imprisonment of *John the baptist*; and the other *more private parts* of OUR LORD's *ministry*, he hath either omitted intirely, or said very little about them. His not following that order of time, in which the things were done, appeareth from the end of the fourth, to the end of the thirteenth, *chapter.* And, therefore, such, as have compiled *harmonies* of the *four gospels*, have found it more difficult, to reduce that part of St. MATTHEW to the order, and method, observed by the other *evangelists.*

It is surprizing, to consider what a multitude of particulars St. MATTHEW hath recorded, in so short a compasse; and that with the greatest simplicity, and distinctness. Though that is nothing but what is common, to him, with the other *evangelists*, who wrote after him.

C H A P. V.

The jewish and roman history continued.

S E C T. I.

The accession of Herod Agrippa raised envy in Herodias. Upon which, she incited Herod Antipas to go to Rome, to petition for a new title, and other favors. Herod Agrippa wrote letters; and accused him of designing a revolt from the roman state. Upon which, he and Herodias were banished. Acts xii. 1.

Acts xii. 1. **I**T will now be proper to return to the *jewish and roman history.* And, for the more regularly carrying it on, we will begin, where we left off, in the *præcedeing book.*

After *Herod Agrippa* was delivered out of prison, and *Caligula* had made him king over the *tetrarchy*, which had belonged to *Philip*, his father's brother; he set out for his new dominions, and went by the way of *Alexandria.* The treatment, which he (and the *jews* in general) met with there, hath been already related. When he came into his *new kingdom*, to settle the affairs of it, all were surprized at the sudden

sudden change; ^a that he, who had formerly fled from his creditors, and had since been in prison, and in danger of his life, should return to take possession of a *kingdom*; and be so highly respected by *Cæsar*, the *roman emperor*. But none were more incensed at it, than his own sister, *Herodias*; who had left her first husband, *Philip*; and married his brother, *Herod Antipas*. She had, indeed, assisted her brother, in his former poverty. But, being a woman of great envy and ambition, when she saw him carried through the croud, with a *crown* upon his head, and the other usual *ensigns of royalty*, she could not bear it, with any patience; that he, who had lived upon the bounty of his friends, and run away from his creditors, as unable to pay his debts, should return to such dignity, as to rise above her husband, and eclipse her glory. Full of envy, therefore, and indignation, she earnestly excited her husband to go to *Rome*, to petition the *emperor* for like honor and dignity; and for some addition to his dominions: and told him, that he ought to spare neither labor nor cost, 'till he was advanced, so as to preserve that superiority to *Herod Agrippa*, which became him, and which, as she intimated, was properly his due. ^b *Herod* was an indolent man, and did not care for the fatigue of applications to the *court of Rome*. But she never ceased importuneing him, 'till she had prevailed with him, even contrary to his own inclinations, to gratifie her ambition, by such an attempt. Away, therefore, he went; and *Herodias* along with him; in a pompous, and magnificent, manner. For they had spared no cost, in their præparation for that extraordinary journey. *Herod Agrippa* soon had notice of their design, and of their great preparations. He, therefore, to prevent their doing him any diskindnesse; as soon as ever he understood that they were set out, dispatched *Fortunatus*, one of his freed-men, with presents to the *emperor*, and letters against *Herod*: though he was both his brother in law, and his uncle. Withall, ordering *Fortunatus*, if he had opportunity, to acquaint *Cæsar* with the same things, by word of mouth. *Fortunatus* had so good a voyage, that he arrived in *Italy*, almost as soon as *Herod* and *Herodias*. For, when they came to *Baiæ*, where *Caligula* then was; whilest *Herod* had the first audience, and was speaking to the *emperor*, concerning the affair which he was come about, *Fortunatus* delivered the letters from his master. *Caligula* happened immediately to read the letters; wherein

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Herod

^a Joseph. Antiq. Jud. l. 18. c. 6. § ult.
c. 9. § ult. & Antiq. l. 18. c. 7.

^b Joseph. de Bell. Jud. l. 2.

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Ch. V.

Sect. I.

Acts xii.

I.

Herod Antipas was accused of formerly conspireing, with *Sejanus*, against the emperor *Tiberius*; and lately with *Artabanus*, king of *Parthia*, against the present emperor. As a proof of which, it was alleged, that he had, in his magazine, arms sufficient for seventy-thousand men. The accusation seemeth to have been intirely groundlesse; and designed, by *Herod Agrippa*, purely to prevent their doing him any mischief. But the very mention of such a magazine alarmed the emperor; who asked him, directly, "Whether he had such a quantity of arms?" And, when he confessed he had, (because the thing was so plane and evident, that he could not deny it) the emperor took it for granted, that the rest of the accusation was true. Upon which, he took the tetrarchy of *Galilee* and *Peræa* from him, and added it to the kingdom of *Herod Agrippa*; who had been his old friend; and had now (as he believed) discovered to him the conspiracy and designed revolt of *Herod Antipas*. He, also, besides these new dominions, made him a present of a sum of money. The other *Herod* he condemned to perpetual banishment, at *Lyons*, in *Gaul*. But, when he understood that *Herodias* was sister to *Herod Agrippa*, he gave her the money which belonged to her; and, supposing that she would be unwilling to go, with her husband, into banishment, he proposed it to her, to return and live under the protection of her brother. She, knowing that she had made that journey out of envy to her brother, and had been the occasion of her husband's fall, refused to leave him in his adversity; and bravely resolved, that, as she had partaken with him in his prosperity, she would bear her share with him in his calamity. *Caligula*, takeing it ill, that she should, with such stoutnesse and pride, refuse the favor, banished her also, along with her husband; and (to her still greater mortification) he took away her substance, and gave it to her brother; whose protection she had refused, and who had already her husband's dominions. Thus ended the dignity of *Herod Antipas*, who had lived in adultery and incest; who had, so cruelly, and upon such a trifling occasion, murdered the pious and excellent *John the baptist*; and treated OUR BLESSED LORD, also, with derision, when sent to him by *Pontius Pilate*. *Josephus* concludeth his account of this affair, in the following manner: "This punishment did GOD inflict upon *Herodias*, for envying her brother; and on *Herod*, for following the vane counsels of a woman." To which I would onely add, that, from *Josephus* his account, we may be satisfied the evangelists were not mistaken, in representing *Herodias*, as the first mover in the barbarous usage, which *John the baptist*

baptist met with ; and that she instigated *Herod*, to commit that shocking murder. ^c

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C H A P. V. S E C T. II.

*Herod Agrippa intercedeth with Caius, for the jews:
but to very little purpose.*

AFTER *Herod Agrippa* had settled his new kingdom, he hastened back to *Rome*. Whilest he was there, *Petronius* his letters were delivered to the emperor ; signifying the state of things in *Judæa*, and the impropriety of setting up the image, in the temple, at that time. *Caius* was much displeased with his excuses, and delays ; though he pretended to be satisfied with his reasons : ordering him, withall, to procede, in the execution of his commands, as soon as ever the harvest was over.

Though *Agrippa* was acquainted with many of the afflictions of the jews at *Alexandria* ; yet he appeareth to have known nothing, hitherto, of the emperor's orders, to erect his image, in the temple, of *Jerusalem*. When, therefore, he went, one day, to pay his respects to *Caius*, and was received with a stern countenance, and upbraided with the obstinacy of his countrymen, the jews ; he fainted away, and was carried home half-dead. In which dejected condition he continued, 'till the next day. When he came to himself, he dared not to venture into *Cæsar's* presence again ; but wrote to him, in an humble, suppliant, manner ; bewailing himself, and the unhappy state of the jews ; and pleading for a revokeing of the order concerning the temple.^a This delayed the affair, for some time. And *Caius*, who seemed at first to relent a little, upon this intercession,^b answered : That, " seeing the jews would not suffer his
" image to be set up, in *Jerusalem* ; he would be satisfied, if they
" would permit such, as pleased, to set it up, in the other towns

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" of

^c Dr. Lardner's *Credibility*, &c. part i. p. 16. 2d edition, p. 27. 3d edition.

^a Philo. de Legat. ad Caium, p. 1028, &c. *Josephus* differeth here again, in several particulars, from *Philo*. But I have intimated, in a note above, why I prefer the account of the latter.

^b Philo de legat. &c. p. 1038.

An. Christi 40. Calig. 3. Book II. Ch. V. Sect II. Acts xii. 1. "of *Judæa*: and that such, as opposed it, should either be punished upon the spot; or sent to him, to suffer according to justice." This greatly tended to fill *Judæa* with confusion; as the jews had so many enemies ready to molest them; and they, on the other hand, were so zealous and tenacious. And, to create such confusion, seemeth very likely to have been the cruel project of the emperor, in making this proposal. As it happened, things continued pretty quiet. And, as *Petronius* was their friend, few, or none, of their neighbors, took that occasion to increase their miseries. But it was not long, before *Caius* himself repented, even of that small favor; and resolved to have an image, made in *Italy*, which he would carry along with him, when he went to *Alexandria*, and set up, suddenly and unexpectedly, in the most holy place, in the temple, at *Jerusalem*. For he had an unspeakable desire to visit the city *Alexandria*; where he intended to make a long stay, and to have his deity publicly established there. After which, he thought, other lesser cities would readily come into it; in imitation of a city of such magnitude and renown. Both *Josephus*, and *Philo*, intimate what danger *Petronius* ran, in delaying so long the execution of *Caligula's* order^c: and, that nothing, but the death of that emperor, could, in all appearance, have preserved his life. But, by a kind providence, *Caligula's* bloody purpose, upon the life of that benevolent governor, was happily prevented; by his own folly, and cruelty's bringing on himself the death, which he so well deserved.

^c Joseph. Antiq. Jud. l. 18. c. 8. § 8, 9. De Bell. Jud. l. 2. c. 10. § ult. Philo. de legat. ad Caium, p. 1028. D, &c.

C H A P. V. S E C T. III.

Flaccus Avilius, *the præfident of Ægypt, was apprehended, and banished; and afterwards, put to death. Helico and Apelles, the grand enemies of the jews. But they, also, in the end, were put to death.*

WE left the *Alexandrian jews* in great calamity, by reason of the enmity of *Flaccus Avilius*, the *roman præfident* there; who strove to curry favor with *Caius*, by obliging the *Ægyptians* of *Alexandria*, and oppressing the *jews*. But his wicked attempt, to secure himself, proved in vane. I do not know, whether *Herod Agrippa* might not have represented, to the *emperor*, the treatment, which he, and the *jews* in general, met with, there; and, in part, influence the *emperor* to punish that unjust *præfident*. But *Flaccus* his former behavior to *Caligula*, and that *emperor's* resentment, were sufficient. Whatever occasioned it, *Caligula* sent *Bassus*, the centurion, with his hundred soldiers, to *Alexandria*, to apprehend him; who stole privately into the city, by night, for fear of making any disturbance.^a And, meeting with a soldier in the dark, he inquired for the *chief captain*; that he might aid him with his troops, if there should be any resistance. It happened, that *Stephanio*, one of *Tiberius* his freed-men, had made an entertainment; to which he had invited *Flaccus*, and the *chief-captain*. And they were then at supper, at *Stephanio's* house. When *Bassus* knew this, he privately beset the house; and sent in one of the soldiers, dressed like a servant, to see what company was there. Who, pressing in, among the servants; and informing the *centurion* that there were but few; he burst in suddenly, with his soldiers, and apprehended *Flaccus*: who was hurried away to *Rome*, in the beginning of winter; where, after some time, he was tried for male-administration. And there he was bitterly accused, by some of those *Ægyptians*, whom he had endeavored, by such unjust methods, to gratifie. They had flattered him, during his being possessed of power; but now (*being men of the most corrupt morals*) they not onely forsook him, in his adversity, but became his greatest enemies. And such, indeed, is the requital, which unjust gover-

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^a Philo in Flac. p. 980, &c.

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governors must expect, from their base and mercenary flatterers, when they have it not in their power to gratifie them any longer. *Flaccus*, upon his trial, was found guilty; and condemned to perpetual banishment, in the island *Andros*. He was apprehended at the time of *the feast of tabernacles*. But the *jews* of *Alexandria* could not observe *the feast*, that year, by reason of their great afflictions. However; this apprehending of their grand enemy gave them some hopes of relief. When *Flaccus* was conducted to the place of banishment, he burst out into tears, upon the first sight of land; bitterly lamenting his unhappy condition. For he could not help comparing his present, with his past, state of life; which he had spent in pleasant countries, and in great prosperity and magnificence. But now, he was fallen from all his glory, and left a prey to his own guilty mind, and melancholy thoughts: not without præsages, that his misery would not end there. For guilt is infinitely suspicious; and he was not ignorant of the temper of the cruel and incensed *emperor*. Nor did his bodeings prove groundlesse. For *Caius*, having inquired of a certain person, whom he had recalled from a long banishment, how he had spent his time there; he answered, in a flattering manner, "That he had prayed to the *gods*, for that which had come to passe; *namely*, "that *Tiberius* might die, and *Caius* succede him." This answer the *emperor* often turned over in his thoughts. And one night, in particular, when he could not sleep, he began to ruminate upon the case of the banished; and to think what an happy retirement they must needs enjoy. Which, upon considering it in this view, appeared to him, rather a blessing, than a punishment; and a state of life that ought to be envied, rather than pitied. And, farther, imagining, from the answer, which he had received from that *exile*, that all, whom he had banished, prayed for his death; he, the next day, gave orders, that executioners should be sent to the islands, round about, and put the banished persons to death: especially such as were the most noble, and persons of the greatest account.^b Nay; to make sure work of it, he gave a list of their names; and particularly took care to mention his old enemy, *Flaccus Avilius*. When the executioners arrived at *Andros*, he suspected their errand, as soon as ever he saw them. And, miserable as he accounted his banishment, before they came; he attempted to fly from them, to save his life. But he in vane endeavored to fly. For they soon overtook him; and, with many wounds, put him

^b In this part of the *history*, I have endeavored to reconcile *Suetonius*, in *vit. Caligul.* c. 28. and *Philo*, in *Flac.* p 991.

him to death. The *jews* had now reason to hope for some favors. But, after he was gone, they found they had other malicious enemies. Particularly *Helico*, an *Ægyptian*; who had been a servant to *Tiberius*, and was highly in favor with *Caligula*.^c He had, for some time, incensed the emperor, against the *jews*; by throwing out frequent scoffs, and great reproaches, upon the whole nation. Him the *Alexandrian ambassadors*, with large presents, and larger promises, excited to procede against the *jews*, with greater virulence. And *Apelles*, the *Ascalonite*, who was also one of *Caligula*'s favorites, joined with *Helico*, to inflame their master, against the poor, afflicted, *jews*.^d It was some time, before the ambassadors of the *jews* could find out, who were their enemies. And, when they had found them out, and would have made their peace with them; the national antipathy was so great, and the prospect of advancing themselves so tempting, that they could work no great good upon them, nor prevail with them to desist from their malicious reproaches and insinuations. They did, indeed, afterwards receive a reward, according to their deserts. For *Apelles* was apprehended, by *Caligula*; laid in chains; and, several times, tortured upon the wheel; which was a miserable and lingering death. And *Helico* was slain, by *Claudius*, the emperor; who succeeded *Caius*. But, in the mean time, they occasioned many fears, and great troubles, to the *jews*.

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CHAP. V. SECT. IV.

The character and death of Caius Caligula, the roman emperor.

BEFORE we speak of the farther advancement of *Herod Agrippa*, we must say something of the character and death of *Caius Caligula*; and of the accession of *Claudius Cæsar*, the succeeding emperor. *Caius Caligula* was the son of *Germanicus*; who for his valor, modesty, and other excellent virtues, had been the darling of the *roman people*. And they were early præjudiced in favor of his son,

^c Philo. de legat. ad Caium, p. 1016.

^d Idem, ibid. p. 1021. C, D.

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Thus far he behaved like a *prince*. — The following particulars show him to have been a *monster*. It was not long, before he recovered from his sicknesse. And then he began to throw off the mask; compelling some, who had devoted themselves to die for his recovery, to perform their vow; out of a pretended concern that they should not be perjured. Soon after, he forced *Silanus*, his father in law, a man of singular virtue, to lay violent hands upon himself, and cut his own throat with a razor; because he had dealt freely and faithfully with him, and would be often giving him good advice. *Caius* was not without suspicion of haveing poisoned his grandmother, *Antonia*. And as to the younger *Tiberius*, whom the *emperor Tiberius* had left his co-partner in the *empire*; and whom he himself had adopted, with a seem-

^a Dr. Prideaux [in his connection of the history of the o. and n. t. part ii. book 8. vol. 2. p. 588. 8vo, edit. 1718.] has asserted "that the posterity of *Octavianus* never enjoyed the empire." Whereas; *Agrippina*, the daughter of *Julia*, *Augustus* his daughter, was the mother of *Caligula*, the emperor; and of *Agrippina*, the mother of the emperor *Nero*. So that *Caligula* was the great grandson of *Augustus*; and *Nero*, his great, great grandson. [See Walter Moyle's works, vol. 2. p. 76.]

^b Sueton. in Calig. c. 11.
Dion. l. 58. ad. finem.

^c Sueton. in Tiber. c. 73. & in Calig. c. 12.
^d Philo de legat. ad Caium, p. 994.

a seeming tenderneſſe and affection, and ſtyled *the prince of the youth*:— Unto him, I ſay, he ſent orders, by a *tribune*, that he ſhould alſo put himſelf to death. A dreadful meſſage, to come, ſuddenly and unexpectedly, to ſo young, and ſo great, a prince! He, poor, unhappy, creature! had never ſeen an execution.^e And, therefore, he begged earneſtly of the officers, who ſtood by, that they would be ſo kind as to give him the fatal ſtroke. But *Caius* pretended, that ſo great a prince ought not to die by any inferior hand. When they reſuſed, he offered his neck to any body, that he met with; begging it of them, as a favor, that they would put him to death. But no body dared to aſſiſt him; any farther, than that ſome, who ſtood by, directed him, where he might wound himſelf, ſo as would moſt quickly diſpatch him. After that, *Caius* put *Macro* to death; a man, who was, indeed, wicked enough, and deſerved to die for his crimes. But he had been *Caius* his friend, in *Tiberius* his time; had aſſiſted him, in obtaining the *empire*;^f and ever ſince; and deſerved not death for his fidelity. Though that was the very reaſon, why his maſter condemned him to death. And, along with *Macro*, *Caius* flew *Ennia*, the wife of *Macro*; with whom he had had an adulterous commerce.^g It would be endleſſe, as well as diſagreeable, to mention his adultery and ſodomy; his inceſt with his own ſiſters; and, afterwards, proſtituteing them to others; and all his abominable and amazeing debaucheries. But what were the diſtinguiſhing parts of his character, were, his *cruelty*, and *wild extravagance*.

The following particulars will ſufficiently manifeſt his uncommon *cruelty*. In the public ſhows, he would not onely ſet one man to fight with another; but multitudes to ſlaughter multitudes. When he had not criminals enow, to caſt to the wild beaſts, he would order ſome of the *ſpectators* to be thrown to them; cauſeing their tongues firſt to be cut out, that they might not be able to ſpeak, or complain. He made ſome of the *roman ſenators* to run by the ſide of his chariot, for ſome miles together, in their robes; others of them to wait upon him, at the table, in the habits of ſervants: and others of them, again, he would privately put to death; and yet afterwards ſend for them, as if they had been living; and, in a few days, give out that they died a natural death. He would, ſometimes, ſhut up the public *granaries*; that the people might have no bread, for ſeveral days together. To ſave the charge of keeping the wild beaſts, he put to death ſeveral

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^e Philo, *ut ſupra*; p. 996.
lig. c. 26.
Sueton. in Calig. c. 12.

^f Dion, l. 58, *ad finem*. Sueton. in Calig.
^g Philo de legat. ad Caium, p. 997. E. & p. 1000. D. &

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malefactors, and fed them with their bodies. He would cause old men, and infirm house-keepers, to be thrown to the wild beasts; that he might get rid of such uselesse, and unprofitable, persons. Some he caused to be put to death, because they were extremely handsome; and others, because they were some way deformed. He used, frequently, in the midst of his feasts and entertainments, to have several persons examined by torture, before his face; or beheaded, for his diversion, by a dexterous executioner. He would compel parents to be present, when their children were put to death. And, when one excused himself, by reason of sicknesse; he sent an horse-litter to fetch him, to see his son executed. Another, after he had beheld such a dismal spectacle, he invited to a banquet; and with all imaginable affability, excited him to be chearful and merry. And another lost his own life, because he could not indure to see his son put to death. He gave orders, that such as were to be slain, should be put to death by degrees; and (as his phrase was) "so as that the person might feel himself die." He lamented that the times, in which he lived, had not been rendered famous, by some public calamities; such as great famine, pestilence, conflagration, or the sudden destruction of some of his armies. Though, I think, it was a too public calamity, that a person of such a disposition should be found among mankind, and advanced to so extensive a dominion. But, what completes his character for *cruelty*, was, that famous expression of his; "when he wished that the people of *Rome* had but one neck," that he might cut it off at once. After his death, there were found two little books; the one of which he called *a sword*, and the other *a dagger*. In which, he had wrote down the names of such persons, as he designed to put to death. And there was also found a large chest, full of various kinds of poison; which being, by *Claudius* his order, thrown into the sea, it is said to have affected the waters so, that the fish were killed, and thrown upon the shore, by the tide.^b

Let us now relate some few of his *wild extravagancies*; which will be a farther opening to his character. When *Tiberius* was at a losse, whom to make his successor, *Thrasyllus*, the *mathematician*, was once heard to say; "*Caius* could no more be *emperor*, than he could ride over the *gulf of Baice*, on horse-back." From that saying, it is thought, that he resolved upon the following ridiculous work; *namely*, to build a bridge, of the length of above three miles, over that arm of the sea: which he did, by ships chained together, and

^b Sueton. in vita Calig. c. 49. *ad finem*.

and covered with earth. And over that, he passed, in a magnificent manner; one day on horse-back, and another day in a chariot. After which, he spent the second day, and the following night, in feasts and entertainments, upon that bridge. But he could not conclude, without giving some specimen of his *cruel temper*. For, after all his entertaining them with pomp and plenty, he caused a great number of the people, there present, to be thrown off that bridge, into the sea. And, when they attempted to climb up again, in order to save their lives, he appointed men to beat them back, 'till they perished in the waters. He contrived the most sumptuous baths, and the most expensive diet. He would dissolve the richest pearls in vinegar, and drink them down at one draught. He built several ships of cedar, adorned in the most extravagant manner; and so large, as to contain bathing rooms, porticoes to walk in, and rooms of state. And, upon their decks, were planted variety of vines, and other fruit-trees. Considering all these things, it is no wonder that he soon consumed that vast treasure, which *Tiberius* had hoarded up; as well as his own large yearly revenues. But, when he came to want supports for his luxury and extravagance, it increased his cruelty; and many lost their estates, and lives too, to furnish him with money, for his farther expenses. Another instance of his folly and extravagance, was his useage of a favorite horse; which he dressed up in purple, and decked with precious stones; building him a marble stable, with an ivory manger; and allowing him an house, and furniture; that they, who should be invited, in the horse's name, might be entertained more splendidly. It is reported, that he actually made *that horse* one of his *priests*ⁱ; and that he fully purposed to exalt him to *the consular dignity*.^k And, though the horse was incapable of acting the part of a wise governor; yet he would have been less noxious to mankind, than the *emperor*, his master.

But his greatest, and wildest, *extravagance* was his pretending to be a GOD; and claiming divine worship. This led him into the most ridiculous, and shocking, behavior. For he would sometimes sit among the statues of the *gods*, that he might be adored, as one of them. But that did not content him. He, therefore, built a temple for himself; and set up an image of gold, made very like him; which was cloathed every day, with the same sort of habit, which he himself wore. There the *priests* (who were, generally, chosen from among some of the greatest of the *romans*) sacrificed, to *the new deity*,

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ⁱ Dion, l. 59. p. 662. alias, 659.

^k Sueton. in Calig. c. 55.

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deity, the choicest and most beautiful birds; as peacocks, pheasants, and the like. Sometimes, he would whisper the image of *Jupiter* in the ear, and threaten to send him back to *Greece*. At other times, he would dresse himself up, in the peculiar mantle, with wings and buskins, and carry a *caduceus* in his hand. And then he was *Mercury*.¹ When he was dressed with a radiant crown upon his head, holding out the *graces* in his right-hand, and a bow and arrows in his left; then he was *Apollo*. So, likewise, he would personate *Bacchus*, or *Neptune*, *Mars*, or *Jupiter*, *Juno*, *Venus*, or *Diana*; either by his habit, or behavior; or by the homage, which he caused his flatterers, and mercenary dependents, to pay him. Yet *this mighty deity* (like most cruel men) was cowardly, and effeminate. For he never ingaged, but once, in war, or military affairs. And then he behaved with his usual folly, when there was no danger. But, when any danger was apprehended, he was ready to run away with the first. He would shut his eyes, and cover his head, at the least thunder and lightening. But if the thunder and lightening were greater, he would run, and hide himself, under the bed. From the account, given by *Suetonius*, *Dion*, and others, it is plane that *Josephus* and *Philo* (though greatly exasperated against him) have not wronged him, in the character, which they have given of him; and, particularly, in the account, which they have given, of his madly aspiring to *divinity*. No wonder that the nation of the *jews* were odious to so vane, and wicked, a *prince*; as thir laws stood so directly in his way. Nay; it is a wonder that an *emperor*, of such pernicious qualities, should be suffered to remain so long upon the earth; rather than that he lost his life so soon, and in such a manner as he did.

The nobility and gentry of *Rome*, as well as the inferior people, felt the daily effects of his arbitrary and cruel government. Indeed, they could not call either their possessions, or their lives, their own. It was fault enough to have any thing to lose. And informers were every where encouraged, that he might increase his revenues. Slaves were heard against their masters, and advanced above them. And his cruel, unjust, government had excited the *odium* of all, except a few of his flatterers, and vile dependents: so that several plotted his death; some to be revenged for past injuries; and others, to prevent the miseries which they feared. Two conspiracies had been discovered,

¹ Philo de legat. ad Caium, p. 1005. B. Sueton. in Calig. c. 52. Dion. l. 59. p. 660. D, &c. alias, 658.

discovered, and frustrated. But a third was formed, which proved effectual. Among the persons, who were incensed against him, *Cassius Chærea* was the chief. He was a *tribune* of the *prætorian* cohort, or a captain of the *life-guards*. And, being of a pretty advanced age, *Caius* would often insult him, as cowardly, and effeminate. And, particularly, when he came for the *watch-word*, he would frequently give him *Cupid*, *Venus*, or *Priapus*, by way of reproach. And, with the like view, when he offered to kisse his hand, *Caius* would form it into some obscene shape, and so hold it out to him.^m Which generally excited the laughter of the other *tribunes*; and made *Chærea* ridiculous, both in the *camp* and in the *city*. But the greatest of mankind should beware of insulting a brave man, though in a much inferior station. It was the custom for the *roman emperors* to oblige the people, when they petitioned for any public favor, during the time of their sports and entertainments, in the *circus*. But, not long before this, when they petitioned, as usual; *Caius* had used them ill. For, when they desired that he would ease them of some of their taxes; he, instead of granting their requests, put several of the petitioners to death. Which, though it silenced the multitude, for that time; yet it also greatly disoblged them. And no time could be more proper to attempt his life, than when he had lost the favor of the people. Besides the frequent insulting and reproaching him, for want of valor, *Caius* would set *Chærea* to torture persons, with severity; whom he himself would afterwards pity and lament, as if they had been so used through *Chærea's* cruelty. The danger of the public, together with his own private resentments, inflamed the *tribune*; and made him long for an opportunity to destroy the *grand enemy of mankind*. But fear of discovery made him keep his thoughts, for some time, to himself: though, at last, he ventured to revele the brave, but dreadful, purpose of his mind. When he had once discovered his intentions, he was forced to hasten the matter, lest some of his associates should betray him. He had often an inclination to have thrown him down from the battlements, as he stood upon the *capitol*, to scatter money among the people; or to have slain him, at the table, in the midst of his feasts. But his friends dissuaded him; for fear he should misse of his purpose, and in vane perish in so great an attempt. It was, therefore, resolved to put it off; untill the games were celebrated, which were instituted in honor of *Augustus*. But, for the three

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^m Dion. l. 59. p. 662. D. alias 660. Sueton. in Calig. c. 56. Jos. Antiq. Jud. l. 19. c. 1. § 4, &c.

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three first days, the conspirators could not find any opportunity. On the fourth, and last day, there was a vast concourse of people, struggling for seats, in the *theatre*, to behold the public games and diversions. For the men and women, senators, knights, and people, slaves and freemen, sate all promiscuously mixed together. And *Caius* was highly pleased to see the confusion and hurry. He began the solemnity of the day, himself, with offering a sacrifice to *Augustus Cæsar*; in honor of whom the *games* were celebrated. And, when some of the blood of the victim lighted upon *Asprenas*, one of the conspirators, it diverted the *emperor*. But it proved a bad omen to *Asprenas*; who was actually slain, soon after the *emperor* himself. After the sacrifice was finished, *Caius* went to the theatre, and sate down, with several of the great men of *Rome* round about him. And *Chærea*, as being one of the *tribunes*, sate not far from him. There happened several remarkable things; as if they had been designed fore-runners of his destruction.^a It is said, that the captain of a band of robbers was represented, upon the stage, as crucified, or brought to public justice: that a *pantomime* introduced the tragedy of *Cinyras*; in which *Cinyras* himself, and his daughter *Myrrha*, were slain: and, that it was the very day, on which *Philip*, king of *Macedonia*, was slain, by his friend, *Pausanias*, as he went into the theatre.^o

About one a-clock, *Cæsar* seemed undetermined, whether he should continue at the theatre, or go to the bath; and, after that, to dinner. For he had not yet thrown off his last night's debauch. But *Asprenas* persuaded him to go to the baths; then to dinner; and afterwards return to the shows and diversions again. *Minucianus*, another of the conspirators, seeing *Chærea* go out, rose up, in order to follow him; and to encourage him not to defer the execution of the plot any longer. But, as he sate within reach, *Caius* pulled him gently by the skirt; and said, in a familiar way, "Where is this good man a going?" So *Minucianus* sate down again. But it was not long, before he arose a second time. And then, *Caius* did not hinder him; as not knowing what occasion he might have to go out. *Chærea* had, by this time, got all things ready. But, the *emperor* not coming out, so soon as he expected, he was very impatient; and was going back to the theatre, to stab *Caius*, before the whole multitude. Though he could not expect any other, than to perish immediately. But, as he was going back, he understood, by the sudden noise and tumult, that *Cæsar* was up, and returning to his palace.

^a Sueton. in Calig. c. 57.

^o Jos. Antiq. Jud. l. 19. c. 1. § 13.

palace. Then the *conspirators* were the most buſie, of any body, to call out, and make way for the *emperor*; being very officious to keep off the people, 'till they had got all round him. When he came to the enterance of the palace, he left the public way, and went through a private paſſage, to ſee ſome boys; which had been ſent for, out of *Aſia*, to ſing and dance upon the ſtage. There *Chærea* came up to him, for the watch-word; which he gave him, after his uſual, insulting, manner. The *tribune* returned the insult; by drawing his ſword, and ſtrikeing him a dreadful blow upon his neck, with theſe words, "*Hoc age. Mind this.*" But the ſword happened to ſtop upon his collar-bone. Upon which, *Cornelius Sabinus* gave him a ſecond wound, as he was down upon his knees. *Caius* made no reply; but ſtrugled to get away. Then the reſt of the *conspirators* cried out, to animate one another; and falling in, upon him, all at once, they diſpatched him, by giving him above thirty wounds. Thus ended the life of *Caius Cæſar Caligula*, on the twenty-fourth day of *January*, in the thirtieth year of his age; after he had reigned almoſt four years.^p — When his death came to be reported abroad, it cauſed a great and general conſternation. And the *German guards* flew about, in a terrible manner; ſlaying ſome of the *conspirators*; and others, who were wholly unconcerned in the affair. Though the tumult was ſoon appeaſed, conſidering the greatneſſe and ſuddenneſſe of the attempt.

^p Joſeph. de Bell. l. 2. c. 11. § 1. Suet. in vit. Calig. c. 58, 59. Dion, l. 59. *ad fin.*

C H A P. V. S E C T. V.

The accession of Claudius Cæsar, to the roman empire. Herod Agrippa was of great service to him, in attaining that dignity. The dominions of Herod were, therefore, enlarged. And the kingdom of Chalcis bestowed upon his brother.

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Acts xii.
1.

W H E N the report was spread abroad, that *Caius* was slain; *Claudius*, the uncle of the deceased *emperor*, ran away in a great fright, and hid himself in a chamber, behind the hangings: where he thought himself secure. But it was not long, before his retreat was discovered. He had been, in his youth, of a very sickly body; and a dull, heavy, genius: so that he was treated, as a common jest, by the *Cæsarean family*; and particularly by *Caligula*, whom he succeeded. But, notwithstanding that, he ascended *the imperial throne*, in the fiftieth year of his age, by a remarkable accident; and when he himself neither sought, nor expected, it. As he lay concealed, *Gratus*, a common soldier, happened to passe through the room. And, spying a man's feet sticking out from behind the hangings, he resolved to know who he was. Upon pulling him out, he found it was *Claudius*; who was ready to die for fear, and fell down upon his knees to beg his life. For he was afraid that he was apprehended, in order to his being put to death. The soldier, having no such intentions, saluted him *emperor*. And carried him away to some more of the soldiers, who took him by turns, upon their shoulders, and carried him to the camp, to the whole army. *Claudius* trembled, and was under the utmost consternation of mind. For he apprehended himself in the greatest danger; and was, indeed, thought, by others, to be hurried away to death. But his fears were intirely groundlesse. For the army proclaimed him *emperor*. And, when the *senate* met in the *capitol*, and made some faint struggles to recover their antient liberty, and form of government; and, consequently, opposed his being *emperor*; the people, as well as the army, encouraged him not to give up his claim.^a

In

^a Sueton. in vita Claud. c. 10. Dio. l. 60. init.

In this tumultuous season, *Herod Agrippa*, when he heard what had happened to *Claudius*, hastened away to him. And, whilst he was in the greatest confusion and terror; and ready to lay aside all pretensions to the *empire*; *Herod* fixed him in the resolution, not to give up his claim. Then he went to the *senate*; and deceitfully inquired of them, "What was become of *Claudius*?" Who informed him of all they knew; and asked his advice, concerning the present state of affairs. He pretended that he was most heartily concerned for their interest; but thought, that, as *Claudius* had the *veteran troops* at his service, the *senate* were not able to oppose him. And, therefore, they had better send to him, and try if they could not persuade him to drop his pretensions. At the same time, offering to go upon that commission, himself. The *senate* approved of the proposal; and desired him to go. But, when he came to *Claudius*, he betrayed the *senate*; and gave *Claudius* such advice, as fixed him in the *imperial throne*. Upon which, the *senators*, who were afraid of the army, had no way left, but to submit; and confirm what the soldiers had done.^b So that *Claudius* succeeded his nephew, *Caligula*, and was the fifth of the *Cæsars*, or *roman emperors*.

In requital for his assistance, in gaining the *empire*, *Claudius* not only confirmed, to *Herod*, by *edict*, the *kingdom*, which *Caius* had given him; but he added to his dominions^c all *Judæa* and *Samaria*, which had belonged to his grandfather, *Herod the great*; restoring them to him, as if they had been his due, by right of consanguinity. He, also, gave him *Abila*, which had belonged to *Lysanias*, and which *Caligula* had designed him; as well as the country in *mount Libanus*. The articles of alliance between them he caused to be ingraven in brass, and laid up in the *capitol*. And, at *Herod Agrippa's* request, he bestowed the kingdom of *Chalcis* upon his brother, whose name was also *Herod*.^d

^b Joseph. Antiq. l. 19. c. 4. de bell. l. 2. c. 11.
A, B. alias 667.
c. 5. § 1.

^c Dio. l. 60. p. 670.
^d Jos. de Bell. Jud. l. 2. c. 11. § 5. Antiq. Jud. l. 19.

C H A P. V. S E C T. VI.

Caius his death encouraged the Alexandrian jews to stand upon their defence. Herod Agrippa, together with his brother, procured an edict from Cæsar, in their favor; and another for the jews, in general, throughout the roman empire. Herod transfers the high-priesthood from one to another; and had Cæsar's image removed out of the synagogue, at Doris. When he had been, some time, in his kingdom, the persecution of the christians revived; by which mean, JAMES, the brother of JOHN, was beheaded; and PETER imprisoned, in order to be put to death: but he made a miraculous escape. The death of Herod. Acts xii. 1, — 24.

An. Christi 41.
 Claud. 1.
 Book II.
 Ch. V.
 Sect. VI.
 Acts xii. 1.

TH E jews of Alexandria, understanding that the emperor Caius was dead, began to take heart, and to stand upon their own defence: which occasioned a sedition between them and the greeks there. But Herod Agrippa, and his brother, Herod, king of Chalcis, procured an edict, from Claudius, in their favor; and they recovered their former privileges.^a That edict was followed by another; which gave full liberty to all the jews, throughout the roman empire, to live according to their own laws, and worship GOD in their own way: not without acknowledgement of their good offices to the roman state; and, “an admonition to them, not to treat “the religions of other people with contempt; but to be satisfied “with thir own liberty, and to behave themselves modestly.” After this, [that is, in the second year of the reign of Claudius Cæsar,] Herod Agrippa was sent away, to his new and enlarged dominions. And it was not long before he arrived at Jerusalem.^b From the

^a Joseph. antiq. jud. l. 19. c. 5. § 2.

^b Id. ibid. § ult. The edict, which was passed in behalf of the jews in general, is said, in the title of it, to have been made, “when Claudius was second time consul.”

the deposing of *Pontius Pilate*, to this accession of *Herod*, the *jews* do not appear to have had any *procurator*, residing among them; or any person, invested with the power of life and death. They, therefore, (considering their temper, and frequent practice) would, very probably, in such an interval, take an unusual licence. And the *christians* were the most likely to feel the effects of their power. And, accordingly, they had acted towards the *christians*; 'till they saw such a black storm gathering over their own heads; and ready, every moment, to fall upon them. The apprehension of their own great danger, seemeth to have been the only thing, which made them desist from persecuting the *christians*. But now, when that storm was quite blown over; and they had got a king of their own nation, who was ready to gratify them to the uttermost; they revived their former wicked practices against the *christians*; and prevailed with *Herod*, their new king, to persecute the disciples of *JESUS*. Upon his coming to *Jerusalem*, he deposed *Theophilus*, the son of *Ananus*, from the high-priesthood; and made *Simon*, the son of *Boethus*, who was surnamed *Cantheras*, high-priest, in his stead. To ingratiate himself with the *jews*, he remitted some of their taxes; and did other acts, to establish himself in his new dominions. Particularly, when certain rash young fellows had erected *Cæsar's* image, in the *synagogue* of the *jews*, at *Doris*; he complained of it, with great indignation, to *Petronius*, who soon had it taken down, and severely reprimanded the *Dorians* for such an attempt; letting them know, that the present emperor, *Claudius*, had passed an *edict* to the contrary, and showed the *jews* great favor. And he required the *magistrates* of *Doris* to deliver up the guilty persons to him; — and to prevent such tumults for the future. For *Petronius* seems to have suspected, that the rulers of that city had either consented to, or connived at, that riot. *Herod*, soon after, took the high-priesthood from *Simon*, and would have given it to *Jonathan*, the son of *Ananus*, who had once enjoyed that dignity; but he refused to accept of it, a second time. Which was, in those days, a rare example of humility and modesty! However; at his request, it was bestowed upon his brother, *Matthias*. But he did not enjoy it long, before the king took it away from him, and conferred it on *Elionæus*, the son of *Chithæus*; who was likewise deposed, in a little time, and *Simon Cantheras* made high-priest again. For they then had the high-priesthood, who would give most money for it; or were most in favor with the

O o 2

per-

consul." And the next thing related, after the *edict*, is, that *Herod Agrippa* was sent away to his dominions, c. 6. § 1.

An. Christi
42.
Claud. 2.
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Ch. V.
Sect. VI.
Acts xii.

An. Christi person, who had power to bestow it. About this time, *Marfus* succeeded *Petronius*, in the government of *Syria*.

^{43.}
Claud. 3.

From the erecting *Cæsar's* image, in the synagogue at *Doris*, even after the accession of *Herod Agrippa*, it plainly appeareth, that the *jews* were not, before that, delivered from the power of their enemies; and from that fear and consternation, which *Caius* his attempt, to set up his image, in their temple and synagogues, had occasioned. And, while they were under such great danger, no wonder that they were not at leisure to look after, and harrasse, the *christians*. But now, the case was altered; when one of the family of *Herod the great* was come to the kingdom of his grandfather. A family, which used not to stick at any methods to ingratiate themselves with persons, who could be of service to them. And *Herod Agrippa* was peculiarly obliging, and complaisant, to the *jews*.^c He had procured, from *Claudius*, the above-mentioned gracious and just *edicts*, in their favor. And he himself was even zealous, in the observation of their rites and ceremonies. But, besides the favors, which he procured them, from *Cæsar*; he sought to gratifie the *jews*, by violent and unjust methods. For finding that the *christians* were under the popular odium; he (not long before the time that *Barnabas* and *Saul* came from *Antioch* to *Jerusalem*, to bring the charitable collection, as a supply against the approaching famine: Not long before that time, I say, *Herod Agrippa*^d) stretched forth his hand, to harrasse and molest several of the *christians*. [He did not reflect upon the injustice of persecuting the *christians*; though he had taken it so ill, that the *heathens*, and particularly *Caligula*, the *roman emperor*, had persecuted the *jews*. As if it had been persecution, onely, to molest the *jews*, for their religion; but had lost it's nature, and ceased to be persecution, when practised, by the *jews*, upon the poor *christians*.] Among the rest, he apprehended *JAMES, the elder*, who was the son of *Zebedee*, and the brother of *JOHN*; and ordered his head to be struck off with a sword.^e This *JAMES* was one of them, who (for his zeale and fortitude) was called, by *OUR LORD*, *the son of thunder*. He was an active, leading man, among the *APOSTLES*; and had ambitiously aspired

^c Joseph. Antiq. Jud. l. 19. c. 6. § 3. & c. 7. § 3. and Dr. Lardner's credibility, &c. part i. p. 19, 2d edition; p. 29, &c. 3d edition.

Ver. 1. ^d The syriac version reads [*Herod the king, surnamed Agrippa.*]

Ver. 2. ^e This early execution of one of the *apostles*, would illustrate the courage of the surviving *apostles*, in going on, with their ministry, with so much stedfastness and zeale; notwithstanding they evidently saw, that their high character, and all their miraculous powers, would not always secure them from the most fierce persecution, or even from a violent death. [See *Clarius* and Dr. Doddridge in loc.]

aspired to the dignity of sitting next to CHRIST, in *his kingdom*; which he then imagined would have been a *temporal kingdom*. But OUR LORD informed him, that the superiority of his *disciples*, and APOSTLES, was not temporal grandeur; but that he, who was most active in service, and most humble, meek, and patient, under afflictions, was the most honorable among them: and that he himself, in particular, must expect to be persecuted, like his *master*; namely,

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Claud. 3.
Book II.
Ch. V.
Sect. VI.
Acts xii.
2, &c.

“to drink of the bitter cup, that he was to drink of; and to be baptized with the *bloody baptism*, with which he was to be baptized.”

Which *prophecie* of OUR LORD [recorded *Matt. xx. 23.*] was now fulfilled. And this zealous, active, APOSTLE became a prey to the will of his implacable enemies, the *jews*; and was the *first martyr* among the APOSTLES. Hereby the number of the APOSTLES of the *circumcision* was reduced to eleven. For we do not find that any other APOSTLE was substituted in his stead: nor had the APOSTLES any successors, in their *apostolic office, authority, and dignity*.

When *Herod* perceived that the beheading of JAMES was grateful to the *jews*, he apprehended PETER also; about the beginning of *April*, or (according to the *jewish* way of reckoning) during the days of unleavened bread; which was the beginning of the feast of the *passover*. For that feast lasted seven or eight days. It was, most probably, in the third year of *Claudius Cæsar*. For the *edict*, in favor of the *jews*, was not passed, 'till the second year of *Claudius*; and *Herod Agrippa* was at *Rome*, 'till after that *edict* was passed. If we, therefore, consider the time, which he must spend, in going from *Rome* to *Jerusalem*; and the multiplicity of other affairs, which must engage his attention, for one while, when he came into his new dominions; we shall be ready to think, that he could not have leisure to inquire after, and persecute, the *christians*, so early as the *passover*; in the second year of *Claudius Cæsar*, if he was then arrived at *Jerusalem*.

When *Herod* had apprehended PETER, the great APOSTLE of the *circumcision*, he was so intent upon securing him, that he delivered him to the care of no less than sixteen soldiers; that they should watch him, by turns, four at a time; two of them being chained to him,^f and two of them watching before the door of the prison.

Ver. 6. ^f See the second dissertation annexed to the paraphrase and notes on *Philemon*. One end of one chain was fastened to St. PETER's right arm; and the other end to the left arm, of one of the soldiers. The other chain was, in like manner, fastened to St. PETER's left arm, and to the other soldier's right arm. [See Dr. Lardner's *credibility*, &c. part i. book i. chap. 10. § 9.]

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 43.
 Claud 3.
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 4, &c.

prison. Very likely, the *jews* remembered how all the APOSTLES had escaped, when they had formerly put them in prison. And, perhaps, they suspected the fidelity of the guards. It was, therefore, very probably, at their request, that such a number of soldiers were appointed to guard the APOSTLE. But the confining him was not all. For *Herod* intended, after the paschal lamb was eaten, and the seven days *festival* quite finished, to bring him out to the people, and gratifie them, with putting him also to death; and that publicly. Dureing the festival, the *jews* used to spend their time in such mirth and jollity, that prisoners were commonly released, rather than executed. But, after all their zeale about *rituals*, they could submit to be concerned in the vilest *immoralities*. As one APOSTLE had been put to death already; and as another, such an eminent APOSTLE, such a zealous promoter of *christianity*, and stedfast support of it, was in so great danger of his life; the *whole church* prayed for him, intently, and without intermission. His enemies thought they had him secure. And the next day was appointed, by *Herod*, for his being publicly put to death. But, the night before he was to have been brought out, and slain in that public manner, PETER (like a man with a good conscience, and ingaged in a good cause) was sleeping, very composedly, between the two soldiers; to whom his arms were chained, on each side. And the other two soldiers were placed, as guards, before the door. And behold, an *angel* of the LORD entered the prison, surrounded with the rays of a glory; and, by striking St. PETER on his side, he awoke him; saying, "Rise up quickly." Upon which, the chains, that had fastened him to the two soldiers, fell off from his hands. And the *angel* added: "Gird " on the cloathes, in which you lie; put on your sandals; throw " about you your loose, upper garment. And, after that, follow " me." St. PETER did every thing as the *angel* bade him. But he did not know that it was *fact*. He imagined that these things were onely represented to him, in a *vision*. The prison was in the suburbs of *Jerusalem*. And, when they had passed the first and second watch, they came to the great iron gate, which led towards the city. It was an heavy gate, and difficult to be opened. But, to them, it seemed to open of it's own accord; or *miraculously*, and by some invisible agent. And, when the *angel* had gone the length of one street with him, he disappeared, and left him to shift for himself. For, *when things are within men's own power, it is folly and præsumption to expect extraordinary assistance*. When the APOSTLE was left alone, and had come to himself again, and found where he was; he was soon

soon convinced, that it was more than a *vision*. Upon which, he could not forbear saying: "Now, I am well assured, that the LORD hath sent his *angel*; and hath, in an extraordinary manner, delivered me out of the hands of *Herod*; and from the expectation of the vast concourse of the *jews*; who thought, this day, to have been spectators of my death." And, having considered a little, whither he should go next; he resolved to go to the house of *Mary*, who was sister to *Barnabas*, and mother to *John Mark*: that *Mark*, I suppose, who was author of one of the *four gospels*, and St. PETER's great companion. When the APOSTLE came thither, several of the *christian brethren* were assembled, and praying for his deliverance. The APOSTLE knocked at the gate. Upon which, a damsel, *Rhoda*, [or *Rose*,] by name, went to inquire, "Who it was, that came thither, so late in the night; and what he wanted?" The APOSTLE told her, that it was PETER. Upon which, she knew his voice: and was so much surprized and over-joyed, that she had not the patience to stay, and open the gate; but ran in, directly, and told them that PETER was at the gate. They answered: "What, are you mad, to talk at that rate?" She persisted in it, that "the person said so; and that she knew his voice." They replied: "It cannot be PETER himself; it must be onely a messenger,^s whom he hath sent; and who has said something about PETER; which you mistook, as if he said that PETER himself was there." The APOSTLE, the mean while, continued knocking. Upon which, several of them went out; and they opened the gate, and let him in; and were convinced that it was he; though not without great surprize and admiration. There was no time to lose, in inquiries, about all the particulars of his deliverance; for fear his enemies should pursue, and overtake, him. He, therefore, beckoned with his hand for silence; and told them briefly, and once for all, how GOD had miraculously delivered him out of prison, by sending an *angel*, that had eluded all the power and vigilance of the guards. And he ordered them to tell it to JAMES, and to the *christian brethren*. [That was JAMES the *lesse*, the son of *Alphæus*; who was, probably, the onely APOSTLE then at *Jerusalem*, except St. PETER. He was one of great esteem among the APOSTLES; and wrote the *epistle*, which

Ver. 15. ^s ἄγγελος doeth often signifie a messenger. See Matt. xi. 10. Mark i. 2. Luke vii. 24; 27. and ix. 52. James ii. 25. Rev. i. 20. and ii. 1, &c.

An. Christi
43.
Claud. 32

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Ch. V.
Sect. VI.

Acts xii.
11, &c.

An. Christi which to this day goeth under his name.^h] After St. PETER had
 43. Claud. 3. given them this brief account of his *miraculous* escape, he (without
 Book II. delay) consulted for his own safety; by leaveing *Jerusalem*, and going
 Ch. V. to another place. The *papists* will have it, that he then went to *Rome*,
 Sect. VI. to found a *christian church* there. But they say so, onely, because
 Acts xii. they apprehend it makes for their purpose, to have men believe so.
 17. &c. For they have no antient and authentic *history* to support their assertion,
 of his going thither so early, if at all.

The next morning, after the APOSTLE's escape, there was no small hurry among the soldiers; who most solicitously inquired, "What was become of PETER?" And, when the *king* had sought, and could not find him; he called the *guards* to an account, and narrowly examined them. But, they being unable to give any satisfactory account of the matter, he ordered them to be hurried away to execution; as suspecting that they had been off their guard, or some way accessory to his escape.

Herod the great, after he had built *Cæsarea-palæstinæ*, had instituted games, to the honor of *Cæsar*; which were to be celebrated every fifth year.ⁱ Not long after the apprehending of St. PETER, the usual time came about, for the celebrating *those* games. *Herod Agrippa* went down to *Cæsarea*, upon that occasion. And another affair, which called him to that part of his dominions, was, his being highly offended with the inhabitants of *Tyre* and *Sidon*; against whom he intended to enter into a war. But they, being tradeing cities, and unable to carry on their traffic, without a free commerce in *Galilee*, and other parts of *Herod's* dominions; from whence they used to purchase large quantities of corn and other provisions;^k they bribed *Blastus*, the *king's* chamberlain, who had a very great influence over his master. And, by that mean, they obtained peace; and prevented the designed war.

Upon occasion of the games, and approaching festival, there was a great resort of the governors, and great men, of the neighboring provinces; and of persons of figure, from all the surrounding countries. On the second day of that solemnity, *Herod Agrippa* came, early in the morning, (most probably, into the *amphitheatre*, built by his grandfather, *Herod the great*,) dressed in a robe of most curious work-

Ver. 17. ^h See the history of him, præfixed to the paraphrase and notes on the epistle of St. *James*.

ⁱ Joseph. de bell. jud. l. i. c. 21. § 8. & antiq. l. 16. c. 5. § 1.

Ver. 20. ^k *Servius* in *Æn.* i. 39. 1 Kings v. 9, 10, 11. Ezek. xxvii. 17. [Vid. *Wetstein* in loc.]

workmanship; all made of silver.¹ That glorious garb, reflecting the beams of the rising sun, gave him a most awful and majestic appearance. And, in that magnificent manner, he sat upon his throne, and made an oration to the people. Which, when he had finished; they, with flattering acclamations, cried out: "Surely this is the *Bath col*,^m the speech of GOD; and not of any mortal man." With which blasphemous applause, the king was pleased; and did not reprove the persons, nor reject the impious flattery. But GOD, who resists the proud, and will not give his glory to another, instantly smote him with a sore disease; because he gave not the glory to him, whose due it was. And worms bred in his putrefied flesh, and devoured him alive. In which wretched condition he continued five days, and then expired; as an instance of GOD's just judgment upon the tyrants, and persecutors of the earth.ⁿ

An. Christi
43.
Claud. 3.
Book II.
Ch. V.
Sect. VI.
Acts xii.
21, ad fin.

There is a wonderful harmony between the accounts, which St. LUKE and *Josephus* have given, of *Herod's* death.^o Onely, *Josephus* is larger, and more expresse. And has particularly taken notice, that the king himself could not but acknowledge the hand of GOD; and how flattering and unjust the acclamations were, which had ascribed *divinity* to him, who was a mortal man, and seized by a disease, which would shortly hurry him out of the world.

He left behind him a son, called *Agrippa*; then seventeen years of age: before whom St. PAUL did afterwards appear, and made an *apology* for christianity; and thereby almost persuaded him to turn christian. He left, also, two daughters, taken notice of, in the new testament; namely, *Berenice*, who was married to *Herod*, king of *Chalcis*, her father's brother; being sixteen years of age; and *Drusilla*, who was afterwards married to the governor *Felix*: as well as *Mariamme*,^p of whom there is no mention in the scripture.

After the death of king *Herod Agrippa*, the kingdom was again reduced to a roman province. And then the persecution of the christians did abate, for a while. In which interval, they were established in

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P p

faith.

Ver. 21. ¹ Joseph. de antiq. jud. l. 19. c. 8. § 2.

Ver. 22. ^m See the syriac version.

Ver. 23. ⁿ See the Cambridge manuscript, greek and latin, in Dr. Mill. In this manner died two other famous persecutors; *Antiochus Epiphanes*. 2 Maccab. ix. 1; 9. and *Herod the great*. Jos. Antiq. l. 17. c. 6. § 5. And in this manner died *Phertime*, after her great cruelty to the inhabitants of *Barca*. Which *Herodotus* supposed, was by the just judgments of the gods. *Melpom. ad finem*. As to the disease itself; see Dr. Mead's medica sacra, p. 101, &c.

^o As to this harmony in the main things, and difference in lesser matters, see Dr. Lardner's credibility, &c. part i. p. 22, &c. 2d edition; p. 32, &c. 3d edition.

^p Joseph. Antiq. Jud. l. 19. c. 9. § 1, &c. & de Bell. l. 2. c. 11. § ult.

An. Christi faith and holiness; being more and more confirmed in the belief of
 Claud. ^{43.} 3. *christianity.* And their numbers increased every day.

Book II.

Ch. V.

Sect. VI.

Acts xii.

ult.

Thus endeth the *second book* of *this history*; which chiefly treat-
 eth of the *conversion* of the *devout gentiles*, otherwise called *profelytes*
of the gate.

And here the *history* of the APOSTLES *of the circumcision* is very
 naturally dropt. For it doeth not appear, from the new testament,
 that they ever preached to *idolatrous gentiles*; at least, before the de-
 struction of *Jerusalem*. — That was the province of the APOSTLES *of*
the uncircumcision: whose labors with, and successe among, the *ido-*
latrous gentiles, will be the subject of *book the third*.

The end of the SECOND BOOK, and of the
 FIRST VOLUME.

Benson, George, 1699-1762

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